The

Bleſſedneſſe of the Death of theſe that die in the Lord, and more eſpecially in ane evil time;

Excellently diſcourſed in ſeven very ſearching, but very ſweet Sermons, on Revel. 14. v. 13.

Wherein, ſeveral weighty caſes relating to death in General, and to dieing in the Lord in particular are ſuccinctly, ſolidly, and ſatiſfeingly handled.

By that Faithful, Fruitful, and Famous Miniſter of the Goſpel, Mr. JAMES DURHAM *ſome time Preacher thereof at* Glaſgow

Job 14. *v.* 14. —— All the dayes of *my* appointed time will I wait, till my change *come*.
Pſal. 90. *v* 12. So teach us to number our *dayes*, that we may apply our hearts to wiſdome.

Nunc age, quod moriturus agas.

Whereunto, at the deſire of the *worthy* Widow and other Judicious Chriſtian Friends *of that* ſingularly ſucceſſeful Miniſter of the *Goſpel, Mr William Guthry*, there is affixed a vindication *of his* ſweet ſmelling memory, from the *high injury done* thereto, by the pitifully *ignorant*, and groſſely non-ſenſical *miſ-printing of* ſome of his *Sermons*.

Printed in the Year 1681.

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To the Very much

HONOURED

and Vertuous,

LADY

MADAM

JEAN COKBURNE,

Lady to the Right Honourable

Sir ROBERT HEPBURNE

OF

KEITH-MARESCHAL

In East-Lothian, Knight.

MADAM,

WHen I was casting in my thoughts, to whom I should addresse the dedication of these few following Sermons, your Ladyships selfe readily

readily offered, being a perſon to whom I am upon many accounts ſingularly obliged, As I am likewiſe unto your Honourable Husband; Haveing alſo had the retirement and conveniencie not far from you, for reviſeing and makeing them ready for the Preſſe, which as you partly know, and as others may conjecture, was not ſo very eaſy a peece of work, conſidering that they were not taken from the Author's Pen, but from his mouth when preaching, by one of his ordinary hearers no Scolar, and afterwards tranſcribed by another perſon of leſſe Judgment: Your La: being withall a genuine and undegenerat Daughter of the Ancient, Honourable, and Loyal Family of *Ormeſtoune*, eminently inſtrumental in our beautiful and bleſſed, in our great and glorious, work of Reformation from Popery, and famous (as it is hoped it will thrugh grace ſtill continue to be, if the like ſad occaſion, as we wiſh it never may, ſhould againe occurre) for ready and chearful receiving, herbouring, cheriſhing, and incourageing the faithful Servants of God and Martyrs of Jeſus; particularly of renowned Mr. *George Wiſhart*, who was thence taken under truſt by the unhappy Earle of *Bothwel*, now extinct and his memorial with him (the mentioning whereof, I know your Honourable Husband Sir *Robert's* juſt regaird for the Reformed Proteſtant Religion, will eaſily perſuade him to bear with, though he may be, for any thing I know, one of the neereſt relations of that ſome-time great Nobleman now ſurviving)

viving) while the houſe of *Ormeſtoune* ſtands and flouriſheth ſtill; which Mr. *Wiſhart*, I ſay, was taken thence; and thereafter moſt cruelly murdered at *Saint-Andrewes*, the then ſeat of *Cardinal Beatton*, who in great ſtate and much pompuous pride, looking out of the Window of his Caſtle there, now almoſt levelled with the ground fedd his luſtful eyes with the horrid and pitiful, but to him pleaſant, ſpectackle, of that eminent Saint and Servant of Chriſt, his be[illegible] brunt alive and conſumed into ashes: The meaſure that Maſter *Patrick Hamiltoune* that notable perſon nobly deſcended, having been * nephew by his Father to the E*arle* of *Arran*, and by the Mother to the D*uke* of *Albany* (no blood being too noble or precious to be lett by theſe butchers, or to be ſuckt by theſe blood-thirſty leeches) mett with at the hands of *Arch-Prelat Beatton* Uncle to the ſaid *Cardinal*, not many years before in that ſame place. O! terrible truculent and Tragical actings, yet ſuch as may be eracted amongſt us, if ever (as God forbid) the *Roman Antichriſt* that ſcarled coloured beaſt drunk with the blood of the Saints, and Martyres of Jeſus, ſhall againe recover his intereſt in theſe Kingdomes, now the Kingdomes of the Lord and of his Chriſt.

But it may be ſome care leſſe and unconcerned *Gallioos*, will, for ſilenceing and ſatisfieing us, ſay *that theſe things were done by Law*; As we are told

* See *Spotſwoods* Hiſt. pag. 52.

told by a late petulant and prophane *Pamphleteer*, that all theſe horrid and hideous perſecutions raiſed and proſecuted againſt many Proteſtants in the neighbouring Kingdome of *England*, in the ſhort but very bloody reigne of *Queen Mary*, notwithſtanding her ſolemne Profeſſions made to the Northfolk and Suffolk Gentlemen, and in plaine *Councel*, to the contrary; *Were according to Law, So that the Martyres in her dayes can no more be accounted ſuch, then thoſe who ſuffered ſince the late Popiſh plot; (above 200. of whom,* being in all but 277, according to his reckonings, (though he reckoneth amiſſe) *were*, as he falſly and impudently alledgeth, *executed as proſligat perſons*, ſpeaking this malicious and groſly calumnious lie purely out of his own, in exact imitation of the Father of lies; for famous Mr. *Fox* that indefatigably laborious ſearcher after all occurrents of that nature, gives us no ſuch account; of whoſe exact ſcrutiny in the ſufferings of the Martyres under *Queen Mary*, ingenuous and impartial Maſter *Fuller* ſpeaking in his eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, ſayeth; *This point hath been handled already ſo curiouſly and copiouſly by* Mr. Fox, *that his induſtry herein hath ſtarved the endeavours of ſuch as ſhall ſucceed him, leaving nothing for their pens and paines to feed upon; for what can the man doe that cometh after the King? But that which hath been already done, and Mr. Fox appearing ſole Emperour in this ſubject, all poſterity may diſpair to add any remarkable diſcoveries which have eſcaped his obſervation;*

tion, wherefor to handle this ſubject after him, is to light a candle to the Sun; and further according to his commendable candor, he adds, as if it had been in deſigned contradiction to this Detractor, *And now to take our leaves of theſe Martyres, what remaines but —— that we embrace and defend that doctrine which they ſealed with their lives, and as occaſion ſhall offer, to vindicat and aſſert their memories from ſuch ſcandalous tongues and pens, as have or ſhall traduce them*; Neither doeth *Doctor Burnet*, in his late Hiſtory of the Reformation of the Church of *England*, give us any ſuch account; Nay neither *Speed* nor *Baker*, whom he moſt injurioufly voucheth for his Authors of this calumny, hint any ſuch thing): But the man hath forgotten, or would not remember, that there have been, may be, and ſtill are in the world, *thrones of iniquity which eſtablish miſchiefe by a Law, wherewith God*, the great Lawgiver, *hath no fellowship*; And that the primitive Chriſtian Martyres, who were moſt cruelly put to death by the perſecuting Pagan-*Roman-Emperours*, particularly by *Trajan*, *Hadrian*, the *Antonins* and *Severus*, wer ſo dealt with by them, according to the Then-lawes of the Roman Empyre; for which reaſon, it is very probable that *John the Divine* in the *Revelation*, brings in ſome of theſe perſecutors with *a pair of ballances in their hands*, inſinuating thereby, that they pretended to weigh and meaſure out their perſecutions of Chriſtians, by exact Juſtice according to Law: Who are therefor no more to be accounted

Martyrs; Nay, all that have suffered most exquisit torments and cruel deaths on the account of the *Protestant Religion*, not only in *Scotland* & *England*, but in *France*, *Germanie*, the *Low countries*, and elsewhere since the beginning of the Reformation, and our forsakeing the Apostate Church of *Rome*: and in *Tholouse*, *Bohemia*, *the Valleyes of Piedmont*, and in other parts of the Christian World before that time, for that very same Religion, tho not under the denomination of *Protestant*, must needs according to the new doctrine of this pretended protestant Author, be dasht out of the roll and catalogue of the *Martyres* of Jesus Christ; because forsooth, they wer generally put to death by and according to the lawes of the respective Countries wherein they suffered, tho these humane Lawes were framed on the matter in contempt and defiance of divine Lawes to the contrary. And yet we need neither wonder nor strange to find this man basely bespattering, as so many profligats, the *Protestants* who suffered in *Queen Mary's* dayes, and ranking them almost in the same class and category, and setting them near by on the same levell with the *Papists*, that were lately executed for their accession to the horrid and hellish plot, and denying the former to have been Martyres more then the latter; who roundly and boldly in the face of the reformed Churches dar assert, that all the difference betwixt the Popish and Protestant Religion is, *in modes and circumstances*, *and no more in reality*; and

that

that *the Lawes which eſtablished the Proteſtant, and abolished the Popish Religion, cannot be otherwayes altered but by ane equal power with that from whence they had their being, King and Parliament, who by aggreeing, no more prejudge the publick in order to Heaven, then they did before, that being only accidental and extrinſecal to the ſubſtance of Religion, by which alone, and not by formes or ceremonies, men are to be ſaved.* What? are there no material and highly momentuous doctrinal differences betwixt *Papiſts* and *Proteſtants?* As about the *Pope* his arrogantly claimed & Uſurped univerſal, Civil, & Eccleſiaſtick ſupremacy, whereby he taketh on him to transfer Kingdomes, to depoſe Kings and Emperors, and to looſe ſubjects from their ſworn alleadgences to them; to interdict as to all facreds, and on the matter to excommunicat, not only particular perſons the greateſt crowned heads not excepted, but wholl Chriſtian Kingdoms at his pleaſure, none being warranted to ſay, what, or why doeſt thou? And all this as Chriſts Viccar on earth, whereas indeed he is the Arch-enemy of Chriſt, even that *Antichriſt* to whom all his characters aſſigned by the Apoſtles *Paul* and *John*, doe moſt exactly and punctually aggree. About his fondly fancied infallibility, times and wayes out of number to the conviction of the World, not only fallibilized, but groſly falſified and belied; as for inſtance undenyably appears in a matter of very great moment, to wit, the different tranſlation of the old vulgar latine

Bible by *Pope Sixtus the fifth*, and by *Pope Clement the eight*, ſome three years only interveening betwixt the one and the other†; each of which tranſlations, is in the preface or bull thereto prefixt, declared to be authentick and obligatory of the whole Chriſtian World, to own the ſame as ſuch; the printing or publiſhing of any other tranſlation, being under the paine of the greater excommunication ſeverly diſcharged; and yet theſe two tranſlations, are not only in a multitude of places, upward of a thouſand, different the one from the other, but in many expreſly contrary the one to the other; ſo that the Popes pretended infallibility, doeth infallibly prove fallible, and falls down flat; for if the one of thoſe tranſlations be infallibly true, the other muſt needs be infallibly falſe, or if they ſhould ſtill ſay, which it ſeems they cannot have the effrontry to doe, that they are both infallibly true, then their Popes will not only be made infallible, but (if it did not involve a blaſphemous repugnancy) ſuperomnipotent, by attributing to them a power to make, moſt really, plainly, and palpably contradictory propoſitions true at once (So that we need not henceforth wonder, that their *Canon-law* ſtileth the Pope, *Our Lord God the Pope*); beſides that ſeveral of theſe pretended infallible Popes, have by the publiſhed confeſſions of their own writers, been found reſpectivly

† *See* Mr. Thomas James *his* Bellum Papale, *and his Defence thereof.*

respectivly guilty of grosseſt Hereſy, Simony, Perjury, Adultery, Sodomy, Necromancy, Sacrificeing to Idols and Devils, and of other moſt vile and abominable villanies; yea, their great Champion *Baronius* at the year 897; expreſly ſayeth, *that for the ſpace of ane hundred and fifty years togither, the Popes wer rather Apoſtats then Apoſtolicks, and that they wer thruſt into the papal chair, by the power of harlots, and by the violence of the Princes of Tuſcany*; which Sandy fundation of alledged infallibility being overturned, all the rotten and tottering ſuperſtructure of his falſe doctrines rear'd up thereon, as ſo many caſtles of come-downe, muſt needs fall to the ground; It is indeed a wonder that any rational man ſhould have the confidence to own ſuch a fancie, but a greater wonder that any profeſſing himſelfe to be a Chriſtian, ſhould make it a grand article of his belieffe, and a baſis of the eternal ſalvation of his immortal ſoul; alace! its to be feared that ane evil conſcience cauterized, and ſome prediſpoſition to Atheiſme, are with many, the great inductives to it. About the authority of the ſacred Scriptures, which they will have wholly as to us, to depend upon the authority of the Church, that is to ſay at bottome, of the Pope, blaſphemouſly alleadging, *that the authority of the Pope is above the authority of the Scriptures, that no book, nay, nor chapter in the whole Bible, is to be held for canonical, without the Popes authority, and that the authority of the Scriptures is no more to be*

valued

valued them Æsops Fables †, *unlesse it wer for the Testimony of their Church.* And about the perfection and perspicuity thereof in all things necessary to Salvation, which they endeavour to disgrace, by the impious imputations of *imperfection* and *obscurity*, calling them a *Black Gospel*, *Incken Divinity*, and a *Nose of Wax* *. About the necessity of unwritten traditions in matters of faith, as proceeding from the same divine authority, and to be received with the same divine beliefe, and under the same paine of divine wrath and damnation, that the divinely and infallibly inspired Scriptures are; For the *Councel*, or rather causlesly curfing *Conventicle*, at *Trent*, sayeth, *that they are to be received with the same reverence.* About the unwarrantableneſſe of translateing the Scriptures into vulgar languages, and of the peoples reading of them, in point blanck-contradiction to the Scriptures themselves; and whatever be pretended, mainly intended to keep them still in grosse ignorance of divine Scripture-truths, and in utter incapacity to discover, detasse, and abandon their abominable errors; and how dar the people presume to read the Scriptures? Since his holineſſe Pope *Innocent* belloweth out like a beast this fine infallible interpretation of that Scripture, anent the beasts not touching the mountaine whereon the Law was given, *This mountaine* (saith he)

† *See* Pighius de Hier. Eccl. *lib.* 1. *cap.* 2. Prierius *his dialogues againſt* Luther. *See Greg.* 7. *Dist.* 12 *Conc. Rom. See* Hermannus.

* *See* Pighius *ibid. lib.* 3. *cap.* 3.

he) *which muſt not be touched by the beaſts, is the high and holy Scriptures, which the unlearned muſt not read*: And their Doctors commonly affirme, that the People muſt not be ſuffered to read the Scriptures, becauſe forſooth, *We muſt not give holy things to dogs, nor caſt pearls before ſwine*: ſuch account make theſe Paſtors of the people, as to rank them amongſt beaſts even the vileſt of them, dogs and ſwine; which ſayeth, ſuch Paſtors are fitter to feed and keep dogs and ſwine, then to feed and watch over rational men and women that have immortal ſouls: And one of them, *Alphonſus de Caſtro*, aſſerts, *that from the reading of the Scriptures, all hereſies come*; though this hath been ordinarly more through the fault of learned men then of the common people, and in neither, through any fault of the Scriptures; They are ſo mad angry at the tranſlation of the Bible into vulgar languages, that ſome of them have boldly belched out this blaſphemy, *That peoples being permitted to read the Bible, was the invention of the Devil* *; there is ane Engliſh Pamphlet printed Anno 1663. intituled, *The Reconciler of Religions*, that hath theſe horrid words, pag. 41. —— *The proteſtant Bible is no more the Word of God, then is the Alchoran or Æſops Fables, it is a Diabolical invention, and a ſacrilegious inſtrument to deceive and damne all ſuch poor ſoules as beleive it, and therefore worthy to be burnt with fire in the midle of the merket at noone, and let all the People*

* *See* Pereſius.

People say Amen, so be it. About justification by works and inherent righteousnesse, and not by the imputed righteousnesse of Christ; whereby sinners have accesse to boast and glory, as being made their owne immediat saviours, and to offer a false sacrifice which God will never accept of, to the great dishonour of the alone Saviour Jesus Christ. About the possibility of not only fulfilling the Law perfectly in this life, tho the whole Scriptures, the universal experience of all ages, and mens own consciences reclaim; but of out-doeing the Law, and doeing more then it requireth or oblidgeth men unto, by their works of *supererogatione*; whereby they think to oblidge God, and to merite from him not only for themselves, but for others also, and whereby they will needs have the righteousnesse of one supererogating Saint, to be imputed to other persons, and hold this for a very real truth, while in the mean time they flout at the imputation of Christs merits and righteousnesse, as but a putative and meerly imaginary thing, so great is the strength of judicially infatuating delusion. About antiscriptural, irrational, nonsensical, and monstrous *Transubstantiation*, whereby they will have the bread and wine in the *Eucharist* turned, and that by the Priest when and as often as he pleaseth, into the very body and blood of Christ, and so will have him, whom the Heavens must receive or containe till the time of the restitutione of all things, to be corporally or bodily present therein, and that in

thou-

thouſands of places at once, as to his whole body; and ſo to be chewed with the teeth, digeſted in the ſtomack, and ſent forth into the draught of the profaineſt wretches that participat of that Sacrament; yea, it may be, to be eaten by mice and rats, terrible to be once but thought of. And their abominable unbloody ſacrifice of the Maſs, offered dayly for the ſinnes of the Living and of the Dead, highly derogatory unto that one propitiatory and Juſtice-attoneing bloody ſacrifice, offered up once for all unto God by Jeſus Chriſt the great high Prieſt, on the golden Altar of his divine nature, by which ſacrifice he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified. About the Sacraments conferring grace on ſuch as receive them by the very deed done; and the neceſſity of a right intention in the adminiſtrator of them, not only as to the fruit and effect, but as to the validity and very being of them; whereby not only their *Opus operatum* is overturned, but moſt things in popery as ſuch, namely their Tranſubſtantiation, and ſacrifice of the Maſs, nay the very *Papacy* itſelfe (as ſome of their own noted writers ſeem to be convinced †) are rendered utterly uncertaine; and in truth nothing left certaine

† *See* Puteanus, *who in* 22. *q.* 1. *art.* 6. *teacheth that it is not abſolutly of faith, that the exiſting Pope* (*v.g.*) *Paul the* 5th *is the true Vicar of Chriſt, and Succeſſor of Peter, becauſe it ſuppons two propoſitions, Paul is baptized* (N. B.) *and Paul is canonically elected, neither of which is abſolutely of Faith.*

certaine among them but this, that there is ane uncertainty of moſt, if not of all things. About their halfe-communion, whereby, on moſt frivolous and fooliſh reaſons, ſuch as their fear leaſt ſome of the wine or blood as they call it, ſhould remaine on the Laiks beards or muſtachoes, they ſacrilegiouſly rob the people of the cup, moſt expreſly contrary to Chriſts allowance thereof on them, in the divine unalterable inſtitution of that moſt precious ordinance, appointed for the ſpiritual nurishment of his people. And the abſolute neceſſity of baptiſme in order to ſalvation; wherby all the Children of them who beleive no other place that ſouls departed goe to after death but Heaven or Hell, are for the meer want thereof, tho neither neglected nor contemned by the parents (for of ſuch contempt or neglect the infants themſelves are incapable) are moſt cruelly damned to Hell fire for ever. About *purgatory*, a meer fable and figment, but indeed a very ſerviceable fire for the Popes Kitchine; whereby the alone, purely, and perfectly purging vertue of Chriſts precious blood, is mightily diſparadged. And about the Popes pardons and indulgences (or rather emulgences or purſe-milking and emptying devyces) offered to all who will give money for them on their ſaying of ſo many *Ave Mary's*, and *Pater-noſters*, and doeing other ſuch poor, childish, and foolish faites; and manyeſt to them that give moſt money, but utterly denyed to thoſe poor wretched ſoules that have nothing.

thing to give. About their praying publickly in the Church, in a language utterly unknown to the generality of the common people; whereby he that ſhould be their mouth to God is a Barbarian to them, and they incapacitat to joine with him underſtandingly, or to give their aſſent to what he prayes; in plaine and palpable contradiction to what is moſt clearly and convinceingly diſcourſed in the Scripture to this purpoſe. About praying to Angels and Saints departed, not without deep and diſhonourable reflections on the interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt our alone Mediator. And About praying for the dead, who are by death put into ane eternal unalterable ſtate, and ſo ſet quit without the reach of the benefite of the prayers of the living. About worſhiping of images with religious and divine worſhip; which if any of them for ſhame ſhould deny, their great Angelick Doctor, *Thomas of Aquin* † will give them the lie, who expreſly ſayes, that the ſame reverence is given to the Image of Chriſt, which is given to himſelfe, and becauſe Chriſt is worſhiped by the worship *Latria* (which is the higheſt worship) his image therefor is to be worshiped with the ſame worship *Latria*; he affirms the like of worship given to the croſſe of Chriſt, or the Crucifix of whatever matter it be made. And on the matter About the obligation of the Second Command, which becauſe it cannot be bowed nor bended, no not by the plenitude of the *Popes*

 power

† *See* Thomas *in* 3. *q.* 25. *Art.* 3, 4.

power, to patronize nor in the leaſt to favour their groſly Idolatrous image-worship, they will needs not only break it, but dash it quit out of the decalogue in deſpite of the great Law giver, who hath ſo vexed and confounded them by that Command, that they cannot evite the dint of it; and hath involved them into ſuch a Labyrinth that they cannot extricat nor bring themſelves out of it, no not by the clew of the ſmaleſt Spun-threed of their moſt ſubtile diſtinctions. About the Apoſtacy of the Saints, and the uncertainty of their Salvation, the very cut-throats of the comfort that is allowed by Jeſus Chriſt on them that unfainedly beleive in him; and about many moe weighty things. Are all theſe but *Ceremonies* and *Circumſtances* in Religion? Can the man be ſo groſly ignorant as to think ſo, or ſo wickedly prejudicat to ſay ſo when he thinks otherwayes? Are all the very ſubſtantial differences betwixt *Proteſtaniſme* and *Popery* thus dwindled away into mere *Modes*, and *Circumſtances*, *Formes*, and *Ceremonies*? And ſhall we look on the great multituds of *Proteſtants*, who on the ſole account of their Religion have been putt to ſo many, various, exquiſit tortures and moſt cruell deaths, as a company of ſilly ſhallow-pated ridiculs, rather to be pitied then as paterns to be imitated, who knew not how to diſtinguish betwixt the *ſubſtance* and mere *modes* and *circumſtances* of Religion, but would needs injudiciouſly and foolishly throw away their lives, burne quick, and run themſelves

ſelves into ſo many extreme ſufferings, for their obſtinat adhering to *modes* and *circumſtances* of Religion, wherein the *ſubſtance* of it was not at all concerned, nor ſo much as trench'd upon or touched? God forbid that we ſhould dar, eſpecially at ſo high a rate, to offend againſt, and condemne the generation of, theſe righteous perſones, who overcame by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of their Teſtimony, and by not loveing their lives unto the death; or ſuffer ourſelves to be whidled into ſuch a ſiniſter and perverſe beliefe of theſe witneſſes and worthies, of whom the world was not worthy, and that upon the bare and unproved aſſertions, and maligne whiſpers, of this truckler after, and trafficker for, *Rome*; *who*, yet if ye will truſt him, *never was, nor is like to be, addicted to Popery*, he is not ſure but he may be, and who I pray that is not over credulous will beleive him, or any other man of his Kidney, that lookes at all differences betwixt *Proteſtants* and *Papiſts*, as matters of mere *Mode*, *Circumſtance*, and *Ceremony*, but that he will be eaſily prevailed with, to forgoe the one and to embrace the other Religion, both being in his account the very ſame for *ſubſtance*, if eſpecially by the change he may come to a litle more ſubſtance in the world?

However, ſince ſuch induſtrious endeavours are uſed to diſparage, diſgrace, and vilifie ſufferers and Martyres for the Proteſtant Religion, and to make litle and light of all the great and weighty

differences betwixt Proteſtaniſme and Popery, It should alarme, as with ſound of trumpet, your La: and all ſound and upright hearted Proteſtants in *Scotland*, to rouze ourſelves, and by all ſuteable, ſinleſſe, and warrantable wayes earneſtly to contend for the reformed Proteſtant Religion, the very faith once for all delivered by Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles to the Saints, (I ſay the very faith ſo delivered, becauſe we reformed Proteſtants heartily own all the doctrine of faith contained in the ſacred Scriptures, and own nothing as neceſſary to be beleived or practiſed in order to ſalvation, that is not contained there, either in expreſſe words, or that is not deducible therefrom by genuine, unconſtrained, and neceſſary conſequence) that hath been ſignally ſealled from Heaven by the converſion, edification, and ſalvatione of multitudes of ſouls; That hath been confirmed by the ſufferings & deaths of many thouſands of Martyres thorrow the world, and of not a few in theſe Kingdomes; That faith for which our noble and renowned Anceſtors did ſo ſtrenuouſly ſtrive and wreſtle, by all lawful means and wayes, that the ſame might be handed down to us; And which God and they have committed to our truſt and cuſtody as a moſt precious *depoſitum*, oblidging us under all higheſt paines, even of his eternal wrath and curſe, that we endeavour to tranſmit the ſame inteir and untainted to them that shall come after us; And that faith which we are withall by ſolemne ingadgements,

taken

taken on before God and the World, indiſpenſibly oblidged to maintain, profeſſe, avouch, and bear teſtimony unto, at any rate or hazard, as we are called to it, It being indeed the true glory of a teſtimony, to give it when God calls for it in the face of danger; Let us therefore be prevailed with, and perſwaded by all theſe and other ſuch conſiderations, earneſtly to contend for this faith, and to ſtand faſt in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free, that we be not againe intangled with the yoke of Antichriſtian bondage. And that we may thorrow grace, be the better diſpoſed and capacitated to doe ſo; We would endeavour; 1. Thorrowly to know, and to be well acquainted with, the principles of the Religion which we profeſſe, that we may be able and ready alwayes, with meekneſſe and fear, to anſwer every one that asketh us a reaſon of our faith and hope; even to have our loins girt about with the truth. 2. We would ſeek to be fully aſſured and perſwaded of the infallible truth and divine authority of the ſacred Scriptures wherein our Religion is contained, and that from the inward work of the Spirit of God bearing teſtimony thereof unto our Spirits according to the Scriptures. 3. We would yet more then ever endeavour to receive the love of the truth, or to receive the truth in love, for the neglect whereof many have been, and moe, if God prevent not, will be, given up to ſtrong deluſion to beleive lies. 4. We would covet earneſtly to feel

the power and more and yet more of the power of our Religion upon our hearts, captivating us to its obedience, and mightily influenceing our practice to ane universal exact conformity to it, that no part nor point of the truth may be detained in unrighteousnesse, nor made, as it wer, a prisoner of, by setting a guard of corrupt affections about it, not suffering it to look out and shew itselfe in our practice. 5. We would study to be and abide near God, not only to make sure on good grounds, that we who wer sometime far off, are now *made* nigh through the blood of Christs crosse as to our state, but by all appointed means to endeavour to *draw* nigh as to our frame, disposition, and walk, (for though it be impossible that there can be any drawing nigh to God in respect of frame where the distance of state remaineth still, yet there may be, as many doleful experiences of the Saints put beyond all reach of debate, great distance of disposition and frame where there is nearnesse of state) that we may hear this to be the unanimous voice of all the occurring providences of these dayes, that its good for us that we draw nigh to God; It was sure alwayes good but never better, alwayes necessary but never more necessary then at such a time, wherin distance from God, usually attended with darknesse and deadnesse, is singularly dangerous and portends sadly. 6. We would endeavour to have the honour and glory of Jesus Christ much endeared to our hearts; To have, and to

keep

keep up, a high and ſuperlative eſteime of him as tranſcendently and incomparably precious, and of the worth and excellency of our Religion, as coming from him, as conforming us to his image, and as diſpoſing and fitting us for the enjoyment of him; that in compariſon of the excellency of the knowledge of him, by and according to Scripture-Religion which we profeſſe, all things in this world, pleaſure, profit, and honour, may in our eſteime be degraded, and detruded into the very loweſt degree of baſeneſſe and vileneſſe, even to be accounted but as loſſe and dung; which will notably prediſpoſe to part with, forgoe, and actually to ſuffer the loſſe of them, when any of them or all of them togither ſhall preſume to compare or come in competition with the excellency of Jeſus Chriſt, and of the Chriſtian reformed Proteſtant Religion: This is a time, wherein all the lovers of Chriſt and of their Religion amongſt us, are in ane eſpecial manner called to have ſuch a low eſteime of all theſe things in this competion, to cry down the market and to let the prices of them fall, to ſitt very looſe of them, to be very denyed to them, and to be ready on a call to let them all goe, when we cannot brooke them and Chriſt and our Religion togither. 7. We would ſett ourſelves down with greater and more grave deliberation then ever, to count what Chriſt and our Religion may coſte us; And to this purpoſe we would caſt up (to ſay ſo) the Kings Book of Rates, the Book of the

holy Scriptures, that there we may see what all the followers of Christ are most expressly called to lay their reckoning with the losse of, for his and the Gospels sake, and what Christ and the very same Religion which we professe, hath coste many of the Saints recorded there; We would also review, as we have accesse, humane writings concerning the many various, great, and greivous losses and sufferings of the Martyres of Jesus, for him and for our Religion, that we may thence further see what they have been put to expend on that noble and non-such account, who yet all reckoned their greatest expence and coste infinitly below the worth of the cause for which they wer put to it; We have generally hitherto, and that for a considerable time, held and possessed our Religion at mighty easy and cheap rates, it hath coste us but very litle; It may be, yea, its probable that the rates will be raised, that the market will be up; Which calls aloud on us to sitt down seriously and soberly and count the coste, whither we will be able to finish and goe through with our undertaking, and that thorrow the neglect and defect of such previous deliberat reckoning, we be not with the surprising and unexpected change and coste putt to give over in the midest of our work, and so expose ourselves to be the objects of the scorne and derision of all observing passers-by. 8. We would beleivingly take Christs bond and obligation, for his gracious and free compensing of all losses that

shall

ſhall be honeſtly undergone for his and the Goſpels ſake, even ane Hundred fold in this preſent time as to what is infinitly better then that which is loſte, and life eternal in the world to come; with the comfortable clauſe *non obſtante perſecutione*, with or notwithſtanding of perſecutione, and to shew that he is not complementing ſincere ſufferers for his ſake, by giving them this his bond for upmaking of their loſſes, nor putting ane emptie ſpoone into their mouth, but ſpeaks his very heart to them, he hath ordered the recording or regeſtrating of it by three of his Evangeliſts, and in every drawght of it (which is worthie obſervation) he hath prefixed a grave aſſeveration, *verely*; O! highly valid, good, and ſufficient ſecurity, given with ſuch ſincerity by ſo infinitly Reſponſal a perſon, whom God hath truſted as great Surty and Cautioner for the debt and duty of all the elect, who can never breck or be unable to pay his debt; And who is willing his people should beleivingly, prayerfully, and humbly ſue him, in the court of Heaven for implement of his bond for compenſation, and will never refuſe the debt, nor will he ſuffer his bond to ly untaken up, nor will he take it up till he hath compleatly payed all that he hath moſt freely become debitor for by his bond and obligation; And when that shall be done, then ſure all loſſes for Chriſt and the Goſpel, for true Religions ſake, shall be fully, ſuperaboundantly, and to ane infinit overplus, made up.

Madam, I am the more incouraged to addres the dedication of these few Sermons on this sweet, serious, and savoury subject to your La: that I know you will read them concernedly, as will also your honourable Husband *Sir Robert* doe, as being, through grace, more immediatly contributive towards his excitment and upstirring, to make ready for his quickly approaching dissolution, walking now betwixt threescore and ten and fourscore years, the outmost ordinary boundary fixed by God in these last ages of the world for the continuance of the short life of man; I know he readeth much, would to God that all the Gentlemen in *Scotland* old and young, gave themselves as much, when not otherwayes necessarly and suitably avocked, to reading of profitable and edifieing bookes as he doeth; they might, through his blessing, be much more accomplished both men and Christians, and a great deal more fitted to serve their generation, according to the will of God, in their respective capacities and stations. That you both may be helped of God, to live more and more so as you may have the well-grounded, lively, and soul-refreshing hope of dieing the blessed death of them that die in the Lord, who rest from their labours and whose works follow them, is the very serious desire of *Madam*

Your La: very much obliged Servant,
July and hearty Well-wisher in the Lord
1681. J. C.

To

READER.

Chriſtian Reader.

MAny and various are the viciſſituds and changes to which ſin hath ſadly ſubjected us poor, tranſient, itinerary, miſerable Mortals, grieving, groaning, dwining, and decaying nothings; the Reireward of all which changes is at length brought up by Death, that laſt, great, and vaſtly momentuous change, which putts a final period to all the changes that ſhall ever befal us in this world; and whereby every one of us without exception of ſexe, age, deſcent, degree, calling or capacity, will be put into an eternally unchangeable ſtate of happineſſe or of miſery: If ſo, then ſure it is very ſad, and never enough to be lamented, if it were with teares of blood, that men and women who have rational and immortal ſouls endued with a diſcurring faculty, and capable of eternal happineſſe in the enjoyment of God, and of eternal miſery in ſeparation and deſtruction from his preſence, ſhould for moſt part, ſo much abſtract from the ſerious thoughts of that moſt important change, followed with ſo long a train of everlaſtingly concerning conſequents, and in their retired meditations, take ſo few turnes in this long gallery of Eternity; As if all that the divinely inſpired Scriptures ſay of it, and that many every day experience the truth of, were a meer Romance, or cunningly deviſed fable: And yet notwithſtanding Death is moſt incontrovertibly certain, all men being by Divine appointment concluded under a neceſſity of dieing; which appointment taketh in not only the infallible certainty of the thing, but the determination of the preciſe time, when, of the place, where, and of the manner, how; whither by a violent or natural death, whither by a more ſudden and ſurpriſing, or by a more lent and lingering, death:

For

For *our times are in the hand of the Lord*, the years, moneths, weeks, dayes, and moments of them, with all their incident changes and revolutions are at his diſpoſe; *There is an appointed time to man on earth, he hath determined the times befor appointed; the times and ſeaſons are keeped in the Father's owne power; our dayes are determined, the number of our Moneths is with him, he hath ſett bounds to us which we cannot tranſgreſſe*: There is no poſſibility of circumduceing the day prefixed to the continuance of our life by his appointment (which is not at all gainſaid by what the Pſalmiſt ſayth of bloody and deceatful men, that they ſhall not halve, or live out halfe their dayes, that is, they ſhall often not live halfe or near ſo long as they might according to the ordinary courſe of nature, or not halfe or near ſo long as they deſired, deſigned, and expected, or, they ſhall be cutt off in the throng of their buſſineſſe, and in the midſt of their projects and deſignes; nor by that ſentence of death of a diſeaſe mortal in its own nature, denounced againſt King *Hezekia*, and the addition of 15. years to his life, which imports only the change and reverſe of a tacitly conditional commination and ſentence (as in that againſt the *Ninivits*, and that againſt *Abimelech* in the matter of *Sarai*) but no change at all of Gods purpoſe and decree, who is not as man that he ſhould repent, whoſe counſel ſtands and with whom there is no variableneſſe nor ſhadow of turning, who had decreed in his eternal purpoſe the drawing forth of *Hezekias* life that length, and had by his decree infallibly enſured the performance of the condition, to witt, *Hezekias* praying, humbling himſelfe, and rouſeing up of himſelfe yet more to the ſerious exerciſe of Godlineſſe, and his uſeing preſcribed means for the recovery of his health; Nor is it gainſaid by any other ſcripture rightly underſtood). So that it ſeemes to be (to ſay no worſe) Atheologick, and no thing conſentient to Divine-Scripture-dictats, poſitively and peremptorly

emptorly to deny that the outmoſt terme and period of this mortal life is unalterably fixed in the eternal purpoſe of God: It being very unreaſonable to ſubſtract and exempt ſo concerning and important a thing as the laſt terme of man's life, or the preciſe time of his death, which in the Scripture is by way of eminency above and beyond all other changes called *His Change*, even that whereby he ſteps over the border of time into eternity, from the ſoveraigne influence of his decree and of his Providence that doth moſt vigilantly and accuratly inſpect the infruſtrable execution thereof; ſince they reach the leaſt momentuous and moſt minute things, even the numbering of our haires, and the falling of a ſparrow to the ground. Beſide, whatever is or can be ſaid againſt this, ſeems with equal ſtrength to militat againſt the immutability of the divine purpoſes and decrees about the everlaſting ſtate of men; and to inferr as great an uncertainty of the later as of the former. And indeed it is worthy Obſervation that thoſe who moſt violently maintain (I ſay moſt violently; becauſe I know there are ſome otherwayes Orthodoxe who demurr in this) that the terme of humane life is unfixed, mutable, and ambulatory, even in the eternal decree and fore-knowledge of God, as well as it is contingent and uncertain in reſpect of natural and ſecond cauſes, do alſo patronize and peremptorly plead for the mutability and conditionality (for both come to the ſame amount) of God's decrees about men's ſpiritual and everlaſting ſtate, making him either dayly to acquire new knowledge, though knowne to him be all his workes from the beginning, or at leaſt to be doubtful and irreſolved in his purpoſes till new emergents ariſing from an uncontrolled and ſelfe-governing *Free-will* cauſe him take new meaſures and reſolutions: Which is a doctrine juſtly exploded by all truly Orthodoxe Divines, as being unworthy of, and injurious to, the infinitly

infinitly wiſe and abſolutly ſupreame Governour of the World; And as haveing a tendency (however it may be honeſted and plaiſtered over with ſpecious and ſplendid pretences of ſomewhat elſe) to narrow and limit the ſoveraigne dominion and will of the infinit Majeſty of God the Creator, that the will of the finit and feckleſſe Creature may have the greater ſcope and latitude of liberty; which yet is no liberty indeed, nor worthy the name of liberty; becauſe it is not that wherewith the Son of God makes free: And to take the crowne of the glory of the converſion and ſalvation of ſinners off the head of free grace, and to fett it moſt ſacrilegiouſly on the head of their own Lord Paramount *Free-will*: And in downe right contradiction to the Scriptures of truth, to make poor man proudly boaſt, that it is not God, but he himſelfe, who hath made him to differ from others; and that he is more oblidged in the Matter of his converſion and ſalvation to his own toward, tractable, gentle, courteous, complyant, and obſequious Free-will, then to God's decree of election, and the efficacious, omnipotently ſweet, and ſweetly omnipotent, infallibly and neceſſarily will-inclining and determining, though not forcibly violenting, or compulſorily coacting, influence of ſoveraignly free grace: If wantonly curious, ſuperciliouſly inſolent, tumultuantly mutinous, corrupt humane Reaſon (ambitiouſly affecting to take up and comprehend the great Abyſſe, the ſhoarleſſe, bottomleſſe, and incomprehenſible Ocean of the Decrees and Providence of God within it's owne litle and ſhallow cockle-ſhell-capacity) would ſuffer its ſelfe to be ſobered and becalmed into a humble and juſt conſideration of things, all thoſe high and haughty reaſonings and debatings againſt the unalterable fixedneſſe of the laſt terme of mans natural life, and againſt the immutability of his Decrees in reference to their ſpiritual and everlaſting

ſtate,

ſtate, would quickly be let fall; for then it would eaſily ſee the great congruity, and pleaſing ſutableneſſe that is in ſubjecting all, and particularly the rational Creatures being but derivat and borrowed bitts of being from that firſt fountain, and original being, that being of beings, in all the events that befal them, and in all their motions, actings, and operations, according to their reſpective natures, entitatively, morally, or graciouſly good; And all the adhering anomies, ataxies, and vitioſities of them; to the Majeſty of the moſt high God, as to his efficient produceing of the one, and as to his permitting, bounding, ordering, and directing of the other, to his owne holy and bleſſed ends; without being juſtly chargeable with any the leaſt culpable acceſſion to them; who is, by the moſt abſolute perfection of his pureſt nature, infinitly removed from all poſſibility of being reached by any tincture or touch of pollution: It would alſo ſee clearly the moſt profoundly and admirably wiſe connexion, that in theſe Decrees of God, and in the execution of them by his all eye-providence, is ordered betwixt the ends, and all the ſeveral midſes leading thereto; it being evident beyond all hazard of rational contradiction, that the boundary of the life of *Ahab*, and of that unbeleeving Samaritan Lord who was trode to death in the gate of *Samaria*, and of our bleſſed Lord Jeſus himſelfe, was determinatly prefixed, ſince it was expreſly fore-told, as the Scripture clears; And it is ſimply impoſſible that Divine predictiones can prove falſe; And yet the man that ſhot at *Ahab* acted freely in ſo doing: Thoſe who trampled that Lord to death were not forced by any to gather themſelves togither into ſuch a croud, or to be ſo reguardleſſe of a perſon of honour; and the Murderers of Chriſt were not a whit the leſſe guilty, that they did nothing but what God's hand and counſel determined befor to be done, nor yet did our Lord any

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thing that was irrational or fooliſh, in uſing lawful and fitt means for his owne preſervation, in ſo frequent retireing and hyding himſelfe from the jewes violence as he did, though as the Scripture often makes mention, *His hour was not yet come*; by which inſtances it is very clear, that the determinatneſſe of the decrees of God, doth no wayes violent or infringe the native freedome of the wills of Men, nor yet is it any excuſe for their ſin, or encouragement to their neglect of means, ſince it is by the uſing rightly or neglecting of theſe, that God cauſeth his unalterable decrees to take their deſigned effect.

As then it is moſt indubitably certain, that we muſt die, ſo the time for the continuance of our life and dayes here, is very ſhort, even but *as an hand-breadth*, and *our age as nothing befor him*, *our dayes are ſpent as a tale that is told*, *they are as a ſhaddow on the earth*, *and there is none abyding*; *they are ſwifter then a Poſt*, *they flee away and ſee no good*; *they are paſſed away as the ſwift Ships*, *as the Eagle that haſteth to the prey*, *they are ſwifter then a Weaver's ſhutle*; *our life is even as a vapour that appeareth for a litle time*, *and then vanisheth away*; as a litle warme breath, that is turned in and out at our Noſtrils, which is very eaſily and quickly ſtopped. The preciſe time alſo of the expiring of this breath of life is (however to God, to whom (as is ſaid) are knowne all his works from the beginning, moſt infallibly certain) to us moſt uncertain; death comes on us ordinarly, *in ſuch an hour as we do not think of*; It comes on us *as a thief in the night*; We are now ſtrong and in good health, and on the ſudden we grow weak and ſicken: Now we live, and by & by we die, & ſee men no more in the land of the living. All which, to witt, the certainty of our death, the exceeding brevity of our frail and brittle life, with the great uncertainty of the preciſe time of our dieing, do with one voice unanimouſly call aloud unto us ſeriouſly to

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mind, and with all our might to make for an other life; to make ſure peace and friendſhip with God thorough the blood of Chriſt's croſſe; to ſecure an intereſt in him (the choice and wale of all intereſts, the only everlaſtingly durable intereſt, in compariſon of which, all other intereſts are but petty and inconſiderable, to which they all ought to cede and give place, and, as it were, to ſtrick their flag and lower their top-ſail) by ſincere cloſing with Jeſus Chriſt on his owne termes, and cordially conſenting to, and taking hold of, the Covenant of Grace; and to live ſo as it becomes them, who are very certain that we ſhall die, and very uncertain how long we ſhall live: To endeavour thorrow grace *to have our loines girded*, to have our affections, as it were, truſſed up that they may not hang down and traile on the earth, and *to have our lights burning*, not only to make ſure on ſolide and good grounds that we have a ſtock of habitual grace, but to endeavour to have it lively and vigorous in its excerciſe, even as it were burning into a flamme; that we may be as men that wait for the coming of their Lord, that in whatſoever watch he ſhall come, we may be ready *to open to him immediatly*, even at the very firſt knock, were it on a night's, or a day's, or an hour's, yea, were it but on a moment's warning, having our houſe (to ſay ſo) in ſuch order, and the ſpirituall affaires of our ſoules ſo well diſpoſed of, and in ſo good a poſtour and caſe, that we may not be taken tardy or napping, nor be on the ſudden ſadly ſurpriſed to our unſpeakable prejudice; even to be in that moſt deſirable and delightful condition, that *to us to live may be Chriſt*, that the very principal ſcope and end which we propoſe to ourſelves in deſiring life and health, may be the honour and

glory of Jesus Christ; looking at life with all the external conveniencies and comforts of it, as but litle valueable and unworthy to be desired were it not mainly in order to this end: And then we may confidently and comfortably conclude, that death whenever, wherever, and however it should overtake us, *would be gain* to us, by puting a final and eternal period to all the remainders of indwelling sin, to all tentationes to sin, to all desertion, and to all complaints and fears of desertion and hydings of God's face; to all doubtings about our gracious estate and about our interest in God; to all feares of backsliding, and of offending, or of giving offence; to all trouble, sorrow, sadnesse, and sighing on whatsoever account; to all indisposition to serve, worship, and glorify God; to all interruptions of fellowship with him, and to all fellowship that is but mediat and in part: To all sinful ignorance and imperfect knowledge, or but in part; These great Theologues there read all their divinity without book, and without any the least difficulty in that beatifical immediat Vision of God's face: And by ushering us in to that blessed estate, wherein we shall be satisfyed with his likenesse, and that both objectively and subjectively, being then admitted to see him in himselfe as he is, face to face, even to full, immediat, and never to be interrupted fellowship with him; and being priviledged to see him *in* ourselves, perfectly conformed to his image in holinesse according to Creature-capacity; and put in case to serve him there, where his Servants serve him as well as ever we desired to serve him in the best frames we were ever in, and in the best houres we ever had on earth in the most countenanced publick ordinances, or in the sweetest secret duties of his worship;

Nay,

Nay, which is yet more, where we ſhall ſerve him as well as ever he commanded us to ſerve him, or ſhall deſire us to ſerve him, that ſure will be in ſuch ſpiritually noble ſtate as we never befor ſerved him while we ſojourned here on earth. Alace! How few, how very few, how lamentably few are there, even amongſt the great multitudes of profeſſing Chriſtians, of pretenders to godlineſſe, and to the hope of that gain and bleſſedneſſe which attends them that die in the Lord, who make it the great buſſineſſe of their life to live thus? even *all the dayes of their appointed time; to wait till their change come*; coveting and crying in prayer to God that he would graciouſly and *effectually ſo teach them to number their dayes, that they may apply their hearts to wiſdome?* How many are there that may at their death ſadly complain, as it is ſtoryed of one *Similis* Captain of the Roman Emperour *Hadrian* his Guard; who having lived long in the City and at Court, and having ſome ſeven years befor his death retiered himſelfe unto a privat Countrey-houſe, where he thought, it is like, he enjoyed himſelfe more, being freed from the avocations, diſtractions, noiſe, and cumberſome converſe of a Court-life, commanded that after his death it ſhould be written over his grave, *Here lyeth Similis who was many yeares, but lived only ſeven*: How many Profeſſors of Religion are there, I ſay, that may thus ſadly and ſorrowfully complain of themſelves when they come to die, Ah! we have been many yeares, but have lived either none at all, or but very few yeares: For that life that is not lived to God, and to the honour and glory of Jeſus Chriſt, is not at all worthy the denomination of life, ſince we are all the time we live ſo, but dead while we live: It is aſtoniſhing to think that Reaſonable

To the Reader.

Men and Women profeſſing they have immortal ſoules, living eſpecially under the clear light and ſun-ſhine of the Goſpel, who do not at all deſigne nor endeavour to live to God, nor to live the life that they now live in the fleſh by the faith of the Son of God, ſhould fooliſhly fancy themſelves to live, and fondly flatter themſelves in a golden dreame, that they ſhall be well at death, and die in the Lord, and ſo be bleſſed with them that die thus; who reſt from their labours, and whoſe works follow them; who enter into peace and reſt in their beds, every one walking in his uprightneſſe; O! fools Paradiſe; O! deplorable and damnable deluſion. Who ever therefor would be, (as all of us are unſpeakably concerned to be) undeceived as to this ſelfe-murthering and ſoul-ruining groſſe practical error and miſtake, and ſeriouſly and ſincerely deſire to live ſo as they may have the well-grounded hope of dieing in the Lord, and of being truely bleſſed at and after their death; (without which it had been much better for them never to have lived at all, or to have lived the life of brutes, even of the moſt abject, vile, contemptible, and abominable brutes, which when they are dead are done, annihilated, and gone) Let them diligently peruſe, and gravely ponder theſe few following Sermons, and pray for the bleſſing of them; The Deſigne whereof (excellently driven by the Author, who did moſt edifyingly and exemplarly, moſt convinceingly and comfortably live and die thus) is to rectify ſuch miſerable miſtakes; and to airth right (which he doth by a moſt admirably divine arte) towards the only ſure and ſafe way of dieing happily, which is by living holily.

I doubt not, Chriſtian Reader, of thy having read ſeveral other Tractats on this ſubject, but I ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe thou haſt hardly read any more ſolidly and ſuccinctly, more pertinently, powerfully, and pungently writen, and withall, more ſuited to the various caſes and conditions of all ſotts of Readers, then this. As for me, while I was reviſing theſe Sermons, and making them ready for the preſſe, I was ſometimes, as I ſtill am, made to doubt (I ſhall not deny but my litle acquaintance with other men's writings may conſiderably influence this doubt) whither any ordinary Miniſter of the Goſpel, hath readily to this purpoſe handled ſo many notable purpoſes to better purpoſe, ſeveral of them ſurpriſing, yet all of them clearly dependent upon, and natively conſequent unto, one another, in ſo few words.

Read then this litle Book (which is *Mr. DURHAMS*, from whoſe pen or mouth, no thinge hath hitherto dropped into the preſſe, that hath been unſavoury or unacceptable to the Churches of Chriſt) again and again, and digeſt it well, and I think I may with humble boldneſſe ſay, that if thou ſhouldſt read nothing elſe on this concerning ſubject but it, and what is writen thereof in the book of the ſacred Scriptures, (which in this and all the other purpoſes treated of in it, doth infinitly tranſcend all the writings of the ableſt and holyeſt men in the world) thou mayſt, through God's bleſſing, be ſufficiently inſtructed thence, how to die the bleſſed Death of them that die in the Lord. Now bleſſed eternally be our bleſſed Lord Jeſus who by his accurſed, but moſt bleſſed Death, hath procured all this Bleſſedneſſe that attends and follows the death of them that die in him; Who are all bleſſed and ſhall be bleſſed in deſpight of the Devil, of the World, and of the Remainder of Corruption dwelling in them till their dieing day; He himſelfe hath pronounced the bleſſing on them, and who ſhall, who dare, who can reverſe it?

it? They are all blessed that live and die in the Lord, and none but they; all true blessedneſſe is entailed upon, ingroſſed and monopolized unto, this honorable *Society*; Not a drahme-weight of it (to ſay ſo) being to be found all the World over beſide; Whatever ignorant, deluded, and befooled men may fancie to the contrary. That thou mayſt be found aſſociated with this bleſſed Company, is the earneſt deſire of

Thy Servant in the Goſpel

J. G.

SERMON

SERMON I.

On Revel. 14. v. 13.

And I heard a voice from heaven, ſaying unto me, write, bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their Labors; and their works doe follow them.

THeſe words are ſingularly uſefull, material and momentuous in themſelves, and it is not for nought that the Spirit of God puts ſuch a mark on them, and that a ſpeciall commiſſion is given to *John* to write them; we have therefor thought it meit to ſpeak a word of them beyond what we can eaſilie reach in the lecture, they including a truth ſo verie concerning to us even the right way of dieing and the happines that follows them that die in the Lord; bleſſedneſſe hath in all ages beene thought of and ſought after by men, though alace many have ſadly miſtaken it, and the way how to come at it, here is the neireſt ſtep and doore to it, even to die rightly and well, and that is to die in the Lord.

That we may a litle open up the meaning of the words we would conſider that this verſe ſett down by way of tranſition coupleth the two laſt parts of the chapter togither; for when *John* hath ſpoken of the warneing and advertiſement given to the world by the

Miniſters of the Goſpell, ere he come to denunce Judgment for deſpyſing of the preached Goſpell, theſe ſweet words are interjected by a voice from heaven, writte ſayes he, *bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord &c.*

The ſcope of them then is this, ſince there wer ſad and doolfull dayes coming and Judgments wer like to be verie univerſall after Gods begining to reckon for deſpyſing of the Goſpell, that he may both ſett out the greatneſſe and terribleneſſe of the Judgments and comfort the Godlie againſt them, the Lord bids *John* writte downe this, that none who die in him neids to be affrayed of them; as if he had ſaid, though theſe Judgments that are coming will be verie great and though many will be removed and ſweeped away by them, and though withall the coming-calamities will be ſuch that the Godlie will be readie to think them happy that wer taken away, yet notwithſtanding, all theſe that die in me are bleſſed.

There are 4 things conſiderable in this verſe, 1. A preface, *I heard avoice from heaven, ſaying unto me writte*, importing the weightineſſe of the matter and commiſſion, for it is ſent from heaven to *John* and he is bidden writte it, its a heavenly meſſage ſent by Chriſt to his Church and even to his Church in theſe tymes and dayes wherein we live. 2. A plaine maxime, concluſion, or generall doctrine laid downe as a moſt certaine truth, writte ſayeth he, *bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord*, regiſtrat and record this ſayeth Chriſt, it hes beene and ſhall be a moſt infalliblie certaine truth to the end of the world, let never ſo many confuſions come and let Kingdomes be turned upſide down, they are bleſſed that die in me. 3. There is a qualification of this truth not denying the univerſalitie of it, but ſeeming to apply it as eſpeciallie verified in ſuch a tyme, *from henceforth, yea ſaith the Spirit.* We cannot ſo expone theſe words as if the mea-

meaning of them wer, that from the tyme of their death they are bleſſed who die in the Lord though that be a truth, 1. Becauſe it agries not with the ſcope, theſe words being a diverſion relateing to this time, and intended for a peculiar comfort to the Godlie againſt the evils of Judgment coming in this tyme. 2. Becauſe it will not agrie with the particle here uſed, *from hence-forth or now*, (as it is in the originall) to expone it ſo, for then it would have beene ſaid, from *thenceforth*, that is from their death forward; but it is from *henceforth*, that is now in this ſad time that is coming; and if any ſhould ask what ſhall be the ſingular happineſſe that theſe ſhall have who after this time ſhall die in the Lord? The anſwer may be drawen from the reaſon that is ſubjoined, which is the 4 thing in the text, *that they may reſt from their Labors and their works doe follow them*; this implyeth a ſpeciall toſſeing and troubleſome time coming, and ſayes this much, that its verie good to be in heaven ere that time come; and out of this reaſon we may ſee a threefold reſpect wherein their happineſſe that die in the Lord is applicable to this tyme, and they doe all agrie to the ſcope. 1. They are freed from much toſſing toill and trouble that the ſurviving godly would be involved in who ſhould have a hard & toilſome life of it under the coming judgments (for the ſcope is to ſett out the greatneſſe of the approching judgments); and they are happy that are taken away from the evil to come, as *Solomon* ſayes *Eccleſ* 4:2. I praiſed the dead which are alreadie dead, more then the living which are alive, meaning they are freed from theſe troubles vanities & vexations that the living wer waited with; they are (as if the Spirit had ſaid) freed from a toilſome and troubleſome world, more ſo now and at this time then at other times. 2. They are happie in this reſpect that now when the Goſpell is brocken out, they die with more confidence, being freed from the

fear of purgatorie, being cleir in the matter of their ſalvation, and aſſured of their goeing immediatly to paradyſe; and this is holden forth in the end of the words in that it is ſaid *their works doe follow them*; though they have no expectation to receave any thing by way of merit, yet it ſhall be well with them who have keeped a good conſcience, for *they ſhall eat the fruit of their doeings*, as it is *Iſai.* 3. for though God give not any thing to his people for their works, yet he rewards them according to their works, ſo proportioning his proceeding with them as nothing ſhall be found to have been done by them for him for nought; and this is a ſpeciall part of their happineſſe, that they ſhall be freed from the anxietie that the darkneſſe of theſe ſuperſtitious times keeped men under being now cleired by the light of the Goſpell. 3. Compareing this with *verſ.* 11. they are bleſſed that die now in the Lord after life and immortality are brought to light by the Goſpell, becauſe they are freed from the ſcroching hell that theſe gott who worſhiped the beaſt; now when the light is come are they not bleſſed who die in the Lord and are freed from that which they would have mett with if they had not lived and died in him but in darkneſſe and ignorance of him? And ſo the words ſay, that when the Goſpell breaketh forth men muſt reſolve to live and die in Chriſt, or to live and die in a more damnable condition then the heathens that lived before them without the Goſpell.

In this concluſion or generall doctrine we have theſe three things implyed, 1. Something common to all, and that is dieing, good and bad have that lot, all muſt die. 2. That there is a difference in dieing as to ſome, though death be common to all, and that is to die in the Lord, 3. That there is a peculiar effect or advantage to them that die with this qualification, and that is happineſſe or bleſſedneſſe, and

theſe

theſe two laſt imply that there are many who die not in the Lord, and that conſequently they are accurſed who neither live nor die in him.

The generall doctrine is plaine and it greatly concerns everie one to take notice of it, it wer good that this text wer ingraven in deep & legible characters on our hearts that we may learn to reckon bleſſedneſſe not ſo much from our life as from our living and dieing jointly togither; be what we will in our life if we die not in Chriſt there is a great lett and mancke in our happineſſe, a curſe in ſtead of a bleſſing, and if this indiſpenſiblie requiſit qualification be in it, it intitles us to this bleſſedneſſe, O! therefore let theſe plaine words and the neceſſity of the doctrine ſpeak home to you.

Firſt then it is implyed here that there is a neceſſitie of dying lying on all, for whill it is ſaid, *bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord*, it ſayes plainly that there is a ſort of dieing that is in the Lord, and a ſort of dying that is out of the Lord, and all ſorts of men and women die one of theſe wayes, as if he had ſaid, would ye know who are indeed happie? Its not all who dy, but ſuch onlie as die in the Lord; ye know what death is, we need not deſcribe it to you, and ye are diſpoſed to think that this needs not to be proved that all muſt dy, and we wiſh it needed no proof, however ſee 1. *Heb.* 9: 27. *Its appointed to men once to die* and *Rom.* 5. where it is ſaid, *that death hath paſſed upon all men* and that *death reignes over all men*, *verſ.* 12. *and* 14. And 2. it is certaine from the cauſe of death, which is ſin and Gods curſe for ſin, death is the wages of ſin, and where ſin is as the cauſe death muſt be as the effect, yea 3. it may be confirmed from neir 6000 years experience, wherein none that have been borne thrughout all generations but they have died; we ſpeak not of theſe extraordinar examples of *Enoch* & *Elias* who wer particularly and ſingu-

larly by the ſoverainge dominion of God exempted from death, neither will we ſpeak of what the Lord did to them in the place of death or for putting them in capacitie to ſuſtaine immortalitie; Gods ordinary way of dealing with menis that which we are called to look to, its eneugh that they have putt off mortality and putt on immortalitie though we know not the manner and way; but look on the race of mankynd and ye will find that theſe who lived longeſt died at laſt as *Adam*, *Enos*, *Cainan*, *Mahalaleel*, *Jared*, *Gen. 5.* and *Methuſelah* who though he lived nyne Hundreth Sixty and nyne years yet died, and its ſaid *Eccleſ. 8:8. There is no man that hath power over the Spirit to retaine it, neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no diſcharge in that war, neither ſhall wickedneſſe deliver thoſe that are given to it*; there is no man that hath power to keep his ſoul in his body, there is no dimiſſion or forloffe in that war, no way to eſcape death, the profaneſt man that putts death furtheſt off from him ſhall not ſhift it; and ſeeing he takes it forgranted & all generations have proved the truth of it, we ſhall inſiſt no further on the proof of it but come to the uſe.

Uſe I. It ſerveth to ſetle and fixe the impreſſion of the truth of this point deeply upon us, and withall to reprove our living ſo much from under and without it; alace we take generall truths ordinarlie for granted, but as for any ſutable uſe or application of them in our practice we live for moſt part as if they wer untruthes; we live as mortall in reſpect of ſeikneſſe, infirmities and feares, but we live as immortall in reſpect of the ſtayed thoughts of a world to come; let me therefor poſe you in ſober ſadneſſe, how often doe ye think ſeriouſly of dying? When laid ye your reckoning ſolidly for it? When deſcended ye into your hearts to ſee how it would be with you at death? how often have you made your teſtament this way to ſay ſo? and when tooke ye your leive and fare-well of the

thing

things of a world and laid them ſome way by; on this conſideration that death will make a finall ſeperation betwixt you and them? Take theſe two or three evidences that ye doe not indeed mind death and mortalitie. 1. The ſtupid ſecuritie we generallie live under and our great unwatchfullneſſe ſayeth plainly that we doe not really mind death, if we wer thinking on death would we be ſo careleſſe in counting with God and ſo litle affrayed what will become of the immortall ſoul, and live as if there wer not a life eternall, and as theſe of the old world did who eated and drank and never, to ſay ſo, once altered their pace? Ah! Is it not ſo with the moſt part now? Death lights like a falcon out of the air on the moſt part of men unawar, becauſe this generall truth is not practically beleived, there could not be ſuch deep and ſenſleſſe ſecurity if there wer ſerious thoughts and reall beleif of dying. 2. The great earthly mindedneſſe and unſatiable coveting and luſting after the things of the world as if men wer perpetually to abyd with them, clearly and convinceingly ſpeak out this, beleive me, ſerious thoughts of dieing would much wean and eſtrange from theſe things; men alace ſeek after a happineſſe here in tyme as if they wer to have ane eternall aboad in the world, as that poor rich man in the Goſpell did who brutiſhly ſaid to his ſoul, *ſoul take thee reſt for thou haſt much goods laid up for many years eat and drink & be mirry*; if men wer on their wing looking for death, ſure they would not thus glutt themſelves with theſe wordlie emptie things, hugely diſproportioned objects for ſatisfieing the vaſt appetite of ane immortal ſoul which by its conſtitution is elevated to the capacitie of an happineſſe of a higher and more excellent nature then theſe things can poſſiblie amount unto; take this then for a palpable evidence of your Atheiſme and unbeleife in this concerning point, and let the thoughts of death come in to bound and moderat your eager and inordi-

nat perſute of the world. 3. The great and intollerable pryd and loftineſſe of men and women is a demonſtration of this, if ye minded death in good earneſt and beleived that it wer neir even at the doore, and that your breath is in your noſtriles, it would make you humble in your walking with God and in your converſeing one with another. 4. Litle preparation for dieing and for the life to come, if there wer no more ſayes plainly and undenyablie that ye lay not death ſeriouſly to heart, which if ye did ye would be ſeeking more to lay up treaſures in heaven and to be flitting (to ſay ſo) your affections thither and towards things above and to be caſting your anchor within the vaile.

Uſe 2. In oppoſition to the former ſecuritie and ſtupid unconcernedneſſe let me beſeech you to mind this more ſeriouſly which is ſo certaine & to take more paines to the prepareing of yourſelves for it, eternitie is long O vaſtlie and incomprehenſiblie long, heaven and hell are matters of great unſpeakablie great moment and conſequence, when the maſter or goodman of the houſe is (to ſay ſo) laid downe and hath ſhutt the door there will thenceforth be no opening; its now your ſummer, provyde O provyde for your long winter, its ill thrift to leave that which is of greateſt concernment hindmoſt, and to put over the ſecureing of your eternall ſtate till the tyme of ſickneſſe & death, ye know not if ever ye ſhall gett advertiſement by any leinthened diſeaſe; and ſickneſſe will have much to doe with itſelfe, neither know ye but ye may be ſnatched away in a moment on the ſudden, and beleive it, its no common thing to die well, and to have death as the entrie and door to happineſſe.

Therefore to ſtirr you up ſeriouſly and timeouſly to mind dying that ye may not with the ſluggard ſay yet a litle ſleep yet a litle ſlumber, and yet a litle folding of the hands to ſleep, whereby the fool is ſlaine, conſider 1. that it will not be bare wiſhes that will make

you

you die well, *Balaam* had many ſuch wiſhes to die the death of the righteous and yet was nothing the better of them, ſpend not your dayes idlie, triffle not away your tyme unprofitablie, for death is alwayes coming on and will not ſtay and wait for your preparation when it comes; ſeek therefore to be found in a watchfull and praying frame, bleſt is that ſervant who when his maſter comes is found in that poſtour waiting for the coming of his Lord and readie to open to him *immediatly* (or at the verie firſt knock) as it is, *Luke* 12. *verſ.* 36. O! Strangely Emphatick wörd! 2. Conſider how few they are who at death are readie and how few they are who at death gett the libertie and bleſſing to make themſelvès readie; ſome I grant as one theife on the croſſe finds mercie, that none may deſpair, yet its but one that none may preſume, but that all may be alarmed to look well and watchfullie to themſelves; many will goe to hell no doubt who will ſeek to enter into heaven and yet will not be able, a ſort of whinging and youlling at death may be in verie godleſſe and Atheiſticall perſons, becauſe they did not begin in tyme to ſeek to enter, as the ſcope of that parable ſheweth; if ye heard the language of many in hell. O! How would they to the life preach this point? Bewar of dallieing and putting off the time, many that are there did ye hear them ſpeak would readily ſay. O! That was our ruine and did undoe us; but if the word of God doe not affect you, nor work you up to the ſerious conſideration of this though one ſhould riſe from the dead and preach to you, it would not affect you to any advantage. 3. Conſider that the longer ye be of thinking on death it will be the terribler when it comes, ſerious and ſuteable thoughts of death before hand would doe much to mitigat the terrour of it, but when death comes violently and ſuddenly on you and finds you ſetled and ſitten downe in the world and will needs have you looſed and raiſed

it is in that caſe indeed as the *King of terrors*, whereas if ye wer dieing daylie and by converſeing with death came to have experience as it wer of litle deathes before hand, that would make death itſelf when it ſhould come much more eaſie, if eſpecially ye wer dieing to your luſts and Idoles, mortified to the world and to the things that are in it, death ſhould have in that caſe but litle to doe when it came; for it is the cleaving of your hearts to theſe things and your being glued to them that makes death ſo terrible, for it will not tryſt nor treat, but ſuddenly and inexorablie ſeperat you and them. 4. Conſider the longer ye be a begining to mind your eternall ſtate and to think ſeriouſly of dieing ye will have the more to doe when death comes; O! There is much work about dieing even to theſe who have been thinking on it, how to gett faith in Chriſt right, how to gett themſelves rolled on the everlaſting covenant for ſalvation, how to be in a patient calme and compoſed frame to incounter the terrors that accompanies death, how to be weaned from the world and to have their affections heavenly; ſure the longer ye putt off ye will have the more to doe and will readilie be the leſſe able to doe it; and is it wiſedom think ye, to leave your greateſt and moſt neceſſarie work to your laſt, weakeſt, and unfitteſt time to goe about it? Which yet alace is the lamentablie fooliſh, demented, ruefull, and ſoul-ruining practice even of many hearers of the Goſpell; there is none of theſe things but it muſt be done before death or not at all; what's in the bargane or buſſineſſe then? O what is in it? It's not ten or tuentie thouſand years happines or miſerie but ane eternitie of happines or miſerie in the greateſt meaſure and higheſt degree that can be imagined; and ſhould ſuch a buſſineſſe be delayed and putt off? And this is even it in the Text by which dieing in the Lord is ſo much commended.

Now before I cloſe this Sermon let me ſpeak a word to

to what it is *to die in the Lord*, which is holden forth as the great and neceſſarie qualification of them that die with well grounded confidence and warantablie expect happineſſe; and there are three Scripture-phraſes that conduce verie much to the opening up of it. 1. It implyes a being in Chriſt as that word is, 2 *Cor.* 5: 17. *If any man be in Chriſt he is a new creature*, this holds out union with him by faith, when Chriſt openeth his armes and takes the ſoul in to himſelfe which flieth to him cloſeth with, and cleaveth to him lyke a graft that is imped in the ſtock, or lyke the manſlayer ſheltred in the citie of refuge; this is the firſt ſtep and ground of happineſſe and it hath with it a new nature and a new life. The 2 phraſe is *Gal.* 2: 21. *I live yet not I but Chriſt liveth in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the ſone of God*, and this is a ſtep furder, when a man by faith is fled to Chriſt & improves and makes uſe of his title to him and intereſt in him for performing the acts of life; this living in Chriſt or by the faith of Chriſt expreſſeth and holdeth forth a new nature and life in the acts of life in bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, and makes the perſon indeed a Chriſtian man or man-chriſtian, doeing not onlie the duties of religion, but all his morall, civill, and naturall actions to Chriſt living thus Chriſtian lyke, as ſpirituall and from the Spirit, as the word is, 2 *Cor.* 5: 5. *Living not to ourſelves but to him &c.* 3. There is *a dieing in the Lord* here in the Text which followes upon the former; living in him is the way to happineſſe and dieing in him is the verie doore thrugh which he entereth into the poſſeſſion of happineſſe; now this dieing in the Lord preſuppoſeth the former and hath ſomewhat more in it, to witt, as ane acting of faith for living in him, ſo ane acting of faith for dieing in him; it takes in; 1. a flieing to Chriſt a freſh and of new for refuge, as it is *Philip.* 3. *verſ.* 9. A ſeeking to be

found

found in him, leaping as it wer out of ourſelves and betakeing ourſelves to him as our ſhip to ſail in thrugh death to life, renunceing our own righteouſneſſe of new and cloſeing with his, yea and renunceing the verie acts of our faith as they are acts. 2. It takes in a giving of credit to Chriſt for bearing us thrugh death, acquieſceing in, and reſting on him on that ground, ſticking cloſſe by our gripes of him, being well content and ſatisfied to adventure to goe thorow death in his hand, and haveing gotten a word from Chriſt reſolvedly to keep the grippe of it, and with old *Simeon* to ſay now lets thou thy ſervant depart in peace; Lord I am content to take ſhipping, as it wer, in Chriſt & in that bottome to ſaile throw the gulfe of death when thou will. 3. It taketh in a humble quieting and ſatisfieing of ourſelves on this ground, not only delyting ourſelves in him as alſufficient, but comforting ourſelves in our thus reſting on him & counting ourſelves happie in it: ſomething of all theſe laſt three we will find holden forth in theſe called the laſt words of David his ſwan-like ſong when he is goeing to die, 2 *Sam.* 23. *verſ.* 5. *Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me ane everlaſting covenant*; here is the firſt ſtep his betakeing of himſelfe and flieing for his life to the grace of God in Chriſt holden out in the covenant. 2. He goes forward and concredits himſelfe to and contents himſelfe in this covenant calling it *a well ordered and ſure covenant*, able & ſufficient to doe his turne, O! its a tight veſhell that cannot have a leck, as if he had ſaid, I may ſail thrugh death in it ſafely & not fear. 3. There is his delyting and ſatisfieing himſelfe in it, his acquieſceing in it, *this is all my ſalvation and all my deſyre* its all my heart can wiſh, *its menſura voti*, the verie outmoſt meaſure of my wiſhes, I need no more & I deſyre no more. Now when we ſpeak of dieing in the Lord we would have you to take all theſe three

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ſteppes togither. 1. Studie to be in him, there is no poſſible dieing in him without being in him, any that would be happie by dieing in him would by all meanes accept of the offer of the Goſpell, flee to Chriſt for refuge & cloſe with him by faith, and endeavour to putt that out of queſtion that ye are in him; O! Make it ſure that thou haſt given him a ſoul to ſave, and acquieſce in him as thy ſaviour. 2. Live by faith in him, there is none that can expect to die in Chriſt that never ſeriouſly ſought to live in him, make it manifeſt that ye live in him by haveing another ſort of life then brutiſh men ſtill in their naturall ſtate have; God may call a thiefe on the croſſe and make him die in Chriſt that hes not lived in him, but none of you can comfortablie expect that he will deall ſo with you, and where one is ſo dealt with, tuentie if not a Hundreth, even verie many die without it: and let me ſay it if ever at any time God was ſtrikeing men and women with ſtupiditie at death, it is palpable he is ſtrikeing many ſo in this time; it may be ſome of you may know Gods ſtrikeing ſome with ſtupiditie that made a mock of the ſerious exerciſe of Godlineſſe in their life-time; therefore I ſay againe make your being in chriſt ſure, evidence your being in him by your living in him & to him. We ſhall not inſiſt further at this time on this ſubject, God calls us all ſeriouſly to think on it; ſickneſſe, ſmiteing with Judgments and death have not readily been more frequent, & if ever there was a time when folke wer called to beleive and lay to heart ſuch a doctrine this is the time; it may be there are ſome here who ere a few dayes goe by may experience the truth of it, and who knows who theſe ſome ſhall be? As ye exſpect happines learne to die, and as to die in Chriſt ſo to live in him; and as the Lord bidds *John* write theſe words, ſo we bid you read them & think often on them, bleſſed are the dead, that die in the Lord, from henceforth ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours and their works doe follow them. SER-

SERMON II.

Revel. 14: 13.

Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord &c.

THere is one thing common to all men and that is a naturall inclination to, and ane appetite and deſyre after happineſſe or bleſſedneſſe, but there are two things wherein the moſt part of men doe exceidingly erre; 1. In ſeeking bleſſedneſſe where it is not to be found and in accounting that to be bleſſedneſſe which is not ſo, but leaves them eternallie miſerable. 2. That when ſome glances of happineſſe and wherin it conſiſts are gotten they groſſlie miſtake the way to come by it; theſe words give a notable deſcription of true bleſſedneſſe, and a clear direction towards the way how to come at it, they ſhew plainly where it lyeth, let the blind and prejudicat world eſteem of it as they will, *bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord*, that is only true bleſſedneſſe which the dead in the Lord injoy, and thats the only way to true bleſſedneſſe, to be in Chriſt & to live & die in him.

This is a moſt concerning ſubject and ſingularly ſuteable to our times; it being probablie with reſpect to theſe times that the words are ſpoken, we ſhall therefor proceed to add a litle to what we ſaid the laſt day.

The doctrine which we ſhall now propoſe and proſecute lyeth plainly and obviouſly in the verie words of the text, they are bleſſed and happie, yea they are only bleſſed and happie that are dead in the Lord Chriſt or ſhall die in him; a voice from heaven aſſerts

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it to *John*, and the Spirit adds a confirmation of it, *yea ſayes the Spirit*, who is the Spirit of Chriſt and the Spirit of truth; we ſhall ere we proceed further in a word or two cleir theſe things in the doctrine which are alſo in the words. 1. What this bleſſedneſſe is? It is ſpoken of here as that which is ſingularly ſo, its the only happie condition that can be truly thought of in all the world, its even to be fullie and compleitly bleſſed. 2. What is the neceſſary qualification of theſe perſons who are pronunced to be bleſſed? Its not theſe that die, but theſe that *die in the Lord* that are thus bleſſed; and for cleiring of this beſide what we ſaid the laſt day we ſhall now adde, that there are two ſorts of dieing ſpoken of in Scripture. 1. There is a dieing in ſin, *if ye beleive not in me, ye ſhall die in your ſinnes*, ſayes Chriſt to the Jewes *John* 8. *verſ.* 24. and this implyes two things. 1. Ye ſhall die under the guilt of your ſinnes, and under the curſe and wrath of God which ye deſerve, before death, at death, & after death. 2. Ye ſhall die in a ſinfull eſtate in oppoſition to repentance for ſin, ye ſhall ſlip away and be removed in that ſinfull condition, ye ſhall depart and goe off the world in that ſinfull ſtate, O ſad & ſorrowfull departure! 2. There is a dieing in the Lord and this implyes two things alſo juſt oppoſit to dieing in ſin. 1. That perſons in the ſenſe of their ſin have betaken themſelves to Chriſt and are freed from the guilt of ſin by faith in him and are cloathed with his righteouſneſſe or with a right and title to it. 2. It implyeth a breaking off of the courſe of ſin, and the bringing forth the fruits of a new nature and life, by a livlie faith in Chriſt in whom as the true vine they are as ſo many branches grafted abyding in him and bringing forth fruit to him that his father may be glorified and they manifeſted to be his diſciples *John* 15. Who as they have union with him by faith, ſo they have communion with him in the fruits of ſanctification; theſe and theſe only are

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thus bleſſed, and this bleſſedneſſe is reſtricted unto and intailed upon them only, and peremptorly denyed to all others and they utterly excluded from it.

In proſecuting the doctrine I ſhall, 1. Cleir the truth of this, that they are bleſſed, exceedingly bleſſed and only bleſſed who are dead or ſhall die in the Lord. 2. I ſhall offer two or three reaſons proveing that this bleſſedneſſe is peculiar to them and not to any other. 3. I ſhall ſpeak a litle to the uſe and improvement of it.

For cleiring of the firſt, that they are exceedingly bleſſed that are dead or ſhall die in the Lord, we need to doe no more but to deſcribe happineſſe or bleſſedneſſe, & we will find it exactly to agrie in all its propperties and circumſtances to them that are dead or ſhall die in Chriſt; O! Sirs look not on this as a ſtorie or ſome airy notion, but as that which is a great realitie, a thing which ſome of our Chriſtian acquaintance dead in the Lord doe now enjoy, and which others ere long ſhall enjoy, and that which by faith in him ye may all enjoy if ye prejudge not yourſelves of it; there are two things neceſſarie to, and conſtitutive of, true bleſſedneſſe or happineſſe, 1. Ane abſolute freedome from all evil, from every thing that troubles or may be the cauſe of trouble, and from any ſinfull blameable or unſuteable defect or want, for happineſſe cannot conſiſt or ſtand with any thing of that kind. 2. A concurrence of all the good things that are neceſſarie to compleit bleſſedneſſe or happineſſe, both which are injoyed by all theſe that die in the Lord and by them only.

For the firſt part of it they that die in the Lord are perfectlie freed from all evil, which holds true whither we look to it more generallie or with more particular reſpect to the ſcope; they are freed from all theſe evills that ane evil time hath with it: to deſcend into the particular conſideration of this bleſſedneſſe would

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not be eaſie, let us only therefore look on ſome generall heads to clear it ſo farr forth as concerns the preſent point. 1. They have freedome from all ſin that is the fountaine of all evils; the Spirits of juſt men are made perfect, before the throne no fleſh or blood as corrupt is permitted to enter in there, no rebellion in the law of the members againſt the law of the mind is there, no remainder of the evil heart of unbeleife in drawing a back from the living God, nor any wearieing of holie duties but a delightfull ſerveing of God day and night, that is, without any the leaſt interruption, for there is not day and night, but conſtant day in that life, then O! Then is that petition ſo often putt up to him in his peoples prayers, *thy will be done as it is in heaven*, fulfilled, there is then a moſt perfect doeing of his will, *there his ſervants ſerve him*; in ſuch Spiritually noble ſtate as he was never ſerved by them on earth; this light, vain and unſtable heart ſhall then be eſtabliſhed and even fixed as ane immoveable pillar in the temple of God, the looſneſſe of a wavering gauding and wandring mind ſhall then be quite and for ever removed, and the thoughts of it ſo ſtrongly ſtayed in the contemplation of that moſt bleſſed object that they ſhall not for ſo much as one moment be diverted, there will not then be any the leaſt inclination to, nor capacitie of a diverſion; O! What would ſome give (wer it to be bought) for this part of happineſſe? even to be fully and finally delivered from a body of death and from the many ſinfull pranks of it, and the dangerous precipices it drives them upon? 2. They have perfect freedome from all tentations to ſin, there doeth not in that moſt clear and ſerene upper region breath the leaſt air of tentation, there is no tentation to ſin from without as there is no inclination to ſin from within and conſequentlie there is a full freedome from all fear of hazard and danger of ſinning, no unclean thing comes within the

gates of the new *Jeruſalem*; ſin and death & the devil being caſt into the lake; there is no evil example there, but on the contrary if there wer any need of ſtirring up, ſtrengthening and encouradging one of another, its there eminently; there is withall there a holie freedome from the difficultie that is in watching here, which though it be a requiſit uſefull and neceſſarie dutie in ſojourning ſaints yet it hath with it a painfullneſſe and fear, from which the dead in the Lord even triumphing ſaints are perfectly freed. 3. They are freed from all challenges for ſin, they have there no troubleſome nor diſquieting exerciſe of conſcience, the immediat enjoyment of Gods companie ſo quiets and ſatisfieth them, that nothing can diſquiet them; there they are under no deſertion nor fear of deſertion, and theſe are often two ſad exerciſes to the godly here, the challenges of their conſcience for ſin, and the weights on their Spirits becauſe of deſertion; there is moreover no lukewarme nor any lyfeleſſe Spirituall condition there, but a condition alwayes freſh, livlie and at the verie beſt, they are continually praiſing in the ſenſe of the love of God overflowing them in duty: the dead in the Lord muſt then certainly be in a moſt happie condition when they are freed from all theſe & from all fear of them. But 4. they are freed from all the effects of ſin, there is no curſe, no wrath, no ſickneſſe of body, no anxietie of mind there, no terror nor apprehenſion of indignation; no povertie no ſcarſitie nor want to them of any thing there (how poor ſoever a life they may have here), but God is all and in all, he by himſelfe immediatly fills the roume of all things, and fills up the vaſteſt capacities of the ſoul; they are alſo freed from all the toſſings and troubles that are here in this lower world, there are no confinings nor fynings, no ſequeſtrations nor forefaultures or hazard of loſeing eſtates, no quarterings of ſouldiers to diſcompoſe the quiet and tranquillitie of families

lies there, which ſome would think a peice of happineſſe to be quyt of; there is no reproach, no diſcredit nor diſgrace there, but *a new name* given; there are no miſtakes nor jealouſies, no alienations nor animoſities, no rents nor diviſions, no unſuteable paſſiones nor heats there, but a moſt comely and compleit union and holie harmonie in the praiſing of God, there is no darkeneſſe of mind there, the underſtanding being perfectly enlightened, no diſorder in the affections, but a moſt exact regularity, no perverſeneſſe nor backwardneſſe in the will, but a moſt thorrow complyance in all things with the will of God, all within the man ſweetly conſpiring in a holie harmonie & in a due ſubordination to the head; there is no ſcandal or offence given nor taken there; there is no ſadning reports nor ill news there; nay its impoſſible there can be, ſince God orders all immediatlie; and they approve all that he does, they applaud to, and are well ſatisfied with all; there are no overturnings of Kingdomes and ſtates, nor confuſions or deſolations in Churches to marr their happineſſe there; but they being fullie acquainted with the infinitly wiſe proceedings of God, there is nothing that can marr their happineſſe, ſuppoſe they knew all theſe overturnings confuſions and diſtractions that make us ſad here below; they cannot be troubled with the want nor with the fear of the want of any thing, and thus they continue to be for ever and ever; yet this is but a litle peice of their happineſſe that die in the Lord, how ſmal a portion of it doe we know?

As to the other halfe of their happineſſe (and O! That ye knew and beleived what the happineſſe is which they have that are now before the throne) we ſaid in generall that there is in it a concurrence of all good things neceſſarie for makeing of them compleitly happie; and it muſt have theſe four things concurring to this end which are all in their eſtate who die

in the Lord. 1. Ane enjoying of God the cheife good, for no other thing nor perſon can communicat true happineſſe nor make one trulie happie. 2ly. Becauſe there cannot be ane enjoying of him without ſome ſuteableneſſe to him, therefor a ſuteableneſſe for the enjoyment of God is required, for we could not, we dought not fullie and immediatlie enjoy God in the eſtate wherein we now are. 3ly. It requires full meaſures and degrees of enjoying God. 4ly. It requires a perpetuall and eternall enjoying of him, and all thir concurr, as I ſaid, to compleit the happineſſe of them that die in the Lord. 1. They doe fullie injoy God the cheife good, look where *Abraham* is there are they, he is in the Kingdome of his father, & ſo are they, and therefor moſt happie; hence it is that Chriſt ſpeaking of bleſſedneſſe to his diſciples he tells them that they ſhall ſitt with *Abraham Iſaac* and *Jacob* in the Kingdome of heaven, *Matth.* 8. *verſ.* 11. they have places among them that ſtand by, *Zech.* 3. *verſ.* 7. they ſee his face and are therefor happie, bleſſed are the pure in heart for they ſhall ſee God, *Matth.* 5. *verſ.* 8. when we ſpeak of enjoying God, it is far very far above and beyond what we can expreſſe; it muſt ſure be a great happineſſe and delight when the object of their delight is no created thing, but the infinit and alſufficient God, it muſt be a pure heavenly and excellent delight that flowes from the enjoyment of God with whom is the fountaine of life. 2ly. They are made meet and ſuteable to enjoy him in a full meaſure and in a high degrie; if we would imagine man's underſtanding to be inlarged to conceive of God, and the inlargement of it to be verie far beyond that which we can now Imagine or conceive, it ſhall be thus dilated and filled; it ſhall then have a diſtinct and fullie ſatisfieing knowledge of the great myſterie of the adorable trinitie, as Chriſt aſſures his diſciples, *Joh.* 14. *verſ.* 20. *At that day ye ſhall know that I am in the father,*

father, the affections ſhall then be made capacious to receave & ſhall be filled and ſatisfied with delight in the enjoyment of that clearlie and diſtinctly known object; it ſatisfies Angels and muſt ſatisfie the Spirits of juſt men made perfect, it makes them happie to behold and enjoy him, and the greateſt happineſſe that the Scripture ſpeaks of, is to be in Chriſts companie, beholding the glorie that he hes gotten from the father; and if ye could ſuteablie conceive what condition *David*, *Paul*, and ſome that have gone a few years or moneths ſince into that bleſſed reſt are in, it would make you long to die in the Lord, and would thrugh grace put you to give all diligence in time to make that happineſſe ſure. 3ly. As they are made ſuteable and meet to enjoy God in a full meaſure and high degrie, ſo they ſhall enjoy him in a full meaſure and degrie actually, there is no more deſyred nor deſyreable, it is full glorie and full joy, none can imagine or wiſh more, it being a thing to which there can be no acceſſion made according to the capacitie that they are put into; for though there be different degrees of glorie and ſome conceave and receave more and ſome leſſe, yet all are filled even filled with the love and loveing-kyndneſſe of God with that fullneſſe of joyes and theſe pleaſures that are at his right hand; and they have all this not in bare notions but moſt realie and in ane incomprehenſible way (to us now at leaſt incomprehenſible) communicated to them. 4ly. This enjoying of God is perpetuall and eternall, for ever & ever without interruption or intermiſſion, its not only a full but ane everlaſting joy and glorie, ſorrow and ſighing ſhall then for ever flee away, and everlaſting joy ſhall be upon their heads for evermore, the croune is ane eternall and immarceſſible one even a croune of life that is perpetually flooriſhing; yet all that we have ſaid falls hugely ſhort of, and as to our manner of expreſſing it, unworthie to be compared

with the happineſſe of them that die in the Lord; if any of them heard us ſpeak of their condition they would wonder to hear us doe it ſo childiſhlie, poorly, meanly & bauchly; O! That we could ſtreatch ourſelves to beleive that which we cannot ſo diſtinctly conceave of this bleſſedneſſe.

The next thing I propoſed to ſpeak a word or two to, is the reaſons why bleſſedneſſe is peculiar only to them that die in the Lord and not to any others; I ſhall ſhortlie hint at three, the 1. whereof is, becauſe only they that die in the Lord Chriſt are made partakers of his ſatisfactione, and therefor they and they only are freed from the curſe by beleiving in him, *John* 3:36. *He that beleiveth on him is not condemned but hath everlaſting life, but he that beleiveth not is condemned alreadie and the wrath of God abideth on him*, *John*. 3. *verſ*. 18. *&* 36. They that beleive have gotten a diſcharge of their debt, the hand-writing that was againſt them is cancelled; but they that beleive not have the bond ſtill ſtanding over their heads, and they for their debt undiſcharged ſhall be hailed before the Judge and caſt in priſon where they muſt lye till they pay the utmoſt farthing which will never be done.

2. Becauſe they only that are in Chriſt and die in him are priviledged with the adoption of ſonnes, and conſequently they only have right to heaven and eternall life, *to as many as receaved him he gave power to become the ſonnes of God, that is, to as many as beleived on his name*, Joh. 1. 12. *And if ſonnes then heirs and joint heirs with Chriſt*, *Rom*. 8: 17. If we be not ſonnes then are we not heirs.

3. Becauſe only they that live and die in Chriſt are new creatures, *if any man be in Chriſt he is a new creature*, 2 Cor 5. verſ. 17. *And in Chriſt Jeſus nothing availls but a new creature*, Gal. 6:15. *Except a man be borne againe he cannot enter into the Kingdome of heaven*, John 3. verſ. 3. And there being none borne againe but they that are in Chriſt, and our regenera-

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tion and faith in Chriſt goeing inſeperablie togither, none can be happie but theſe that live and die in him.

We come now in the 3d place according to the method propoſed to ſpeak to the uſes of this doctrine, which muſt needs have many uſes being ſuch a high point as holds forth the right way and the only way to true bleſſedneſſe.

The firſt uſe then is to put us all to be more ferioußlie exerciſed how to die well, & that is to die in the Lord; ſeeing happineſſe and ſuch a happineſs depends on it, & only on it, then ſure folkes ſhould be exceedingly concerned to walk by this midle, of dieing in him as they would meet with happineſſe at the end. There are many things that preſſe this; as 1. if peace and tranquillitie of mind and conſcience be of concernment, then this is of concernment, for how can they poſſiblie have peace that know not whither they ſhall goe to heaven or hell? 2. If comfort in any thing or all things be of concernment, then this is of concernment, for how can men's ſleep, meat, drink, apparrell, or any thing they enjoy be comfortable to them if they know not that they are in him and ſhall die in him? This one word may marr all their mirth and happineſſe, that they that are not in him ſhall die miſerablie and ſo loſe all other comforts. 3. If it be of concernment to have boldneſſe and confidence to god-wards at death, this is of concernment; for if death ſadlie ſurprize men how can they have peace, confidence or boldneſſe ſince they are not in him? All the world cannot buy nor purchaſſe a quiet and good conſcience to them. 4. If we think heaven or happineſſe to be of concernment, then this is no doubt of concernment, for heaven and happineſſe are knitt to dieing in him; and therefor let me in the name of the Lord lay it upon you, by all ſuteable means to endeavour to bear it upon your verie hearts to have your peace with God made in time, that die when ye will, it may be

made ſure that it ſhall be in him; think ye that to be eternally in heaven or in hell is of litle concernment? Its your way of dieing that makes the difference, as the tree falls ſo it will ly; there will be no revocking of that ſentence nor any change of your ſtate after death; and knowes any of you when it will come? Are any ſure to gett time or grace then to make peace with God when ſeikneſſe and death comes? Are there not many ſtriken with hardneſſe, ſenſleſſneſſe and conſcience benuming ſtupiditie at their death? Remember therefor that death is coming and ſtudie to have this much in your eye.

To proſecute this uſe a litle and to reprove the great ſtupiditie that the moſt part live in as if they cared not how they die, (for how live many groſſlie prophane and Atheiſticall men, as if they wer to die like beaſts? And how many preſumptuous hypocrites are there, that think it a verie eaſie matter to die, yea that it is nothing; and how many are there who have frequent fears and convictions eſpecially at death, who yet never come to ſuch length to make it ſure on good grounds that their ſinnes are laid on Chriſt, and to make it their great buſſineſſe to have their corruption mortified by his grace that they may die in him? And how many are there that have ſome good in them who are verie laſie and careleſſe and who in a manner let death come as it will?) We ſhall ſeeing it is of ſuch mightie concernment) preſſe it on you by a familiar laying before you ſome things that are verie ordinarie to men and women at death; we look a face upon death affarr off, but we ſhould bring it neir to us and have it alwayes before us, the neglect whereof makes folke verie ordinarly to die as they live, and thats not well nor in the Lord: there are four caſes or conditions that we moſt ordinarlie meet with in the pluralitie of them that die. 1 We find ſome ſenſleſſe and ſtupid without any fear of God or regaird to their ſouls, they

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lived a ſtupid life without all fear and aw of the majeſtie of God, and they die ſo, thus Churliſh *Nabal* died as he lived moſt ſtupidly and ſenſeleſſly; it might poſſiblie be edifieing though verie ſad to ſpeak of the lamentable condition of ſome graceleſſe perſons that die among us; therefor putt away ſenſeleſſneſſe and ſtupiditie now alonge your life, as ye would not die ſenſeleſſe and ſtupid. A 2d ſort of perſons we meet with who have been p eſumeing all their dayes, and will needs pertinaciouſly diſput it out at their death that all ſhall be well with them; and though it may be palpablie diſcerned that they are without all due ſenſe of ſin and utterly void of grace, yet they will confidently averre that they be elved all their dayes, and will not quyt their deluding hopes that all ſhall be well with them now at death; O! Sins think ye that to be a good condition, to die without ſenſe of ſinne, and with werſh, teaſtleſſe, lifeleſſe and groundleſſe apprehenſions of mercie; dread therefor and deprecat preſumption; O! But its hard to get ſome of you convinced of it, and yet it is a ſpeciall thing that keeps you from coming in good earneſt to Chriſt. A 3d ſort are theſe that die with ſome litle challenges, and at the beſt with much doubting, and many feares who have had their own convictions fears and doubtings in their life, and yet never laboured in Gods way, to be thrugh in the matter of their intereſt in, and peace with God; they are affrayed to die, and yet die they muſt, the faith they had mi'gives them, and the ſtrong apprehenſions they have of wrath quite overturnes their confidence and hope, the juſt recompence of living in a doubtfull and doubting condition without ſerious ſeeking after thorrow clearneſſe; I grant this condition is ſomewhat better then any of the former two, and yet ane evil and dangerous condition to die in; words ſp ken to them doe neither ſatisfie nor ſetle them, for either they have litle Judgment or tentations

tions are ſtrong and vigorous, or bodily infirmitie is growing faſt on them. There is a 4th ſort of ſelfe-righteous perſons, that pleaſe themſelves with a hope of heaven, becauſe they have been good neighbours, and lived harmleſſlie, they wer not groſſly prophane, they wer not drunkards, ſweirers, ſabbath-breakers nor extortioners &c. But civil and honeſt, faithfull and juſt in their deallings and their callings, they had prayer in their families and in ſecreet, they waited on ordinances &c. And at death they confirme themſelves from theſe grounds that all ſhall be well; we condemne not duties, God forbid, but its a ſad and hazardous caſe when they are mainly laid weight on and ſtuck to at death; ſuch ſelfe-juſtifiers are brought in by the Lord *Luke* 13. ſaying Lord we have eaten and drunken in thy preſence &c whom yet he boaſts away from him; ſee how the proud and ſelfe-juſtifieing Pharaſie on ſuch grounds as theſe is ſent away unjuſtified *Luke* 18. folkes habituating themſelves to theſe grounds of confidence in their life-time makes them ſtick ſtiffly to them at their death, and keeps them from ſeeing the abſolute neceſſitie of Chriſts imputed righteouſneſſe, and from fleeing to it for their juſtification.

The 2d Uſe is of exhortation to ſtir up yourſelves from theſe conſiderations to think on death more ſeriouſly, and how ye may die in the Lord; and to this end we ſhall propoſe three queſtions that ye would lay your account to be putt to anſwer at death.

1. Think how ye will anſwer the challenges that death will readilie bring alonge with it and urge you for a ſatisfieing anſwer unto, where there hath been a negligent life there will be many challenges, yea where there hath been a diligent life there will not be challenges wanting, ye would ſee how to prevent or anſwer theſe; I ſhall inſtance only in fyve of them. 1. When this comes, thou haſt ſtiffled many good purpoſes and reſo-

reſolutions, or ſuſpended the conſciencious execution and practice of them, thou haſt delayed and putt off from day to day the making of thy peace with God, how wilt thou anſwer that? When conſcience begins to reflect and look back and to aske how is all? Is the houſe out of order through thy negligence? Tell me man what is the reaſon thou made not thy peace with God ſure before this time? Dideſt thou ſhuffle by ſuch and ſuch a dutie when thou waſt called to it and when it was preſſed on thee? Why didſt thou forbear to mortifie ſuch and ſuch a luſt? Conſider, O! Conſider how ye will anſwer ſuch a challenge when ye will not dar to adventure on death; and yet will not be able to put it off, O ſecure Atheiſts and contemners of Godlineſſe conſider in time what ye will ſay to this. 2. Another challenge will be this, the conſcience will ſay thou haſt been buſied in following after ſome vaine luſt, buſſie about the bigging of a houſe, about the gathering of ſome gear or riches, about makeing conqueiſt of ſuch a peice of land &c. Now what will all theſe advantage thee? And what profite haſt thou of all theſe things whereof thou art now aſhamed? Why dideſt thou fett thine eyes on, why beſtowed thou ſo much labour and ſpent ſo much time and pains on that which cannot ſatisfie, on that which is not? What good will they then doe to thee? It ſhall be ſaid to thee; fool this night thy ſoul ſhall be taken from thee and then whoſe ſhall theſe things be; what advantage is there or can there poſſiblie be in gaining the wholl world if thou loſe thy own ſoul? And O! What grounds of ſuch challenges are there in this generation? A thing which when death comes will ſtick to and gnaw in the conſciences of many of you that hear me this day, even that you have been cumbred and carefull about many things while in the mean time the one thing neceſſary hath been poſtponed and quite neglected. A 3d challenge, the ground

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whereof is alace verie common, will be, careleſſe ſloathfull and idle triffling away and miſpending of precious time, and neglecting the great work of ſalvation, eaſie letting paſſe without improvement opportunities of getting good and doeing good, when ye ſhall looke back and ask yourſelves what have we been doeing in this our day? And the conſcience will anſwer and ſay, ye wer vainlie diſcourſing or tipling or vaiging and wandering thorrow the feilds buſſied in doeing nothing or worſe then nothing, then ye will cry but in vaine, O! To have ſome of theſe precious opportunities back againe, that we thought litle of when we had them; we have paſt 30. or 40. years time in the world, and yet are no ſurer of our ſalvation now then when we came into it, but we have much more ſin and guilt then we had; Ah! Will ſome ſay we have lived 50. or 60. years and yet none of all that time hath been well ſpent. A 4th challenge will be, folks formalitie & hypocriſie in the worſhip of God, that they came to the Church to hear, but ſleeped or wandred and wer nothing carefull to profite, that they ſatt downe and prayed, but wer not in earneſt in it, never ſought after the Spirit of grace and of ſupplications, it may be they prayed in their families, and in ſecreet, but when the conſcience lookes back and ſees that all hath been but formall and hypocriticall work, that they knew not what communion with God was, they knew not neither cared to know whither their perſons wer accepted and their prayers heard, they ſtudied not experimentally to be acquainted with the life & power of godlineſſe, O! How ſad will this be? And how will it all be gote anſwered? A 5th challenge will be abuſeing of many means of grace, of many mercies and favours, ſuch as Sabbaths, Sermons, Conferences &c. that ye lived not under heathniſh or Antichriſtian darkneſſe, but where the pure light of the Goſpell ſhined clearly, that ye might have known

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the right way and would not, that ye might have made uſe of ſuch ane Inſtrument, of ſuch a Sermon, of ſuch fellowſhip, of ſuch a book &c. And it would have been better with you, but ye did not, ye would not; the conſcience will ſay, here ye wer negligent, there ye dallied, here ye wearied, and there ye ſatt up and gave over, and what can ye now anſwer for all? There are many in *Glaſgow* and elſe where, that will meet with this challenge if not with Gods Judgment for the ſinnes whereon it is founded; as ye would die in the Lord, for Chriſts ſake, ſtudie to prevent ſuch challenges, and to gett them ſcored out by timeous turning to God in Chriſt and ſeriouſneſſe in the way of faith and holineſſe; for aſſuredly death will bring alonge with it many moe and many other challenges then moſt have now while they live and are in health, they will prick & byt in ane other manner then quicklie tranſient lighter touches of convictions doe now.

The 2d Queſtion we would propoſe is, how will ye anſwer ſome peculiar tentations that death uſeth to bring alonge with it; for tentations are then more ſlie and ſubtile as challenges are more loud and peirceing, and the devil is then more then ordinarly buſſie, and if tentations be then yeilded to, he hath almoſt win the cauſe; O! Conſider how ye will anſwer theſe tentations; I ſhall only inſtance theſe fyve tentations that uſe to aſſault and ſett upon folk at death; the 1. is a tentation to fretting againſt Gods diſpenſation in removeing and calling away a perſon at ſuch a time and under ſuch circumſtances, which fretting floweth from a unwillingneſſe to die; O! As enimitie will be ready to burſt out in being angrie at Gods chopping by death at the man in the midſt of ſuch a deſigne and project or before he gott ſuch a bargane ended, ſuch a purchaſſe made, or ſuch a child provyded for &c. And if the devil prevail by this tentation to fretting and repining at divine diſpoſall, it

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will marr the fruit of any thing that might be then expected, and will further eſtrange you from God that ye cannot come neir him, and yet O! How ryfe is ſuch a tentation? Studie to walk therefore in a ſweet plyableneſſe and readineſſe to die, for if ye goe on following one deſigne after another, and one wordlie buſſineſſe after another without this ſtudie, ye will be taken unawarſe ſuddenly ſurpriſed in the midſt of them as many are, and be in eminent hazard of being prevailled over by this tentation to fretting and grudging at deaths arreaſting though by the great and righteous Judge his order. A 2d tentation is to Atheiſme, for as folke have lived in Atheiſme, ſo the devil aſſaults them by tentations to Atheiſme at their death, to make them deſpyſe death and deſperatly to harden themſelves againſt it, and with a profaine and damnable ſort of delicacy *Agag* like to throw themſelves into the pitt; hence many deſperat ſoules who as they tuſhed alonge their life at the thoughts of death, ſo when death comes they trouble not themſelves with it, but ſhake off all fear and ſtudie a ſort of godleſſe gallantrie of Spirit, and ſeeing they muſt die they will die, and will not ſo much as ſeem to regaird it; but will ye that way outface the wrath of God and dar to laugh in takeing the cup of his indignation in your hands? It is true, I grant it is a peece of Gods dreadfull juſtice that theſe who have not ſtood in aw of him in their life, ſhould die Judicially hardened, but ſuch will meet with a moſt fearfull wakening after it. A 3d tentation is to preſumption and hypocriſie, which prevaills eſpecially with civil and formall profeſſours, that dought never abyd to be evened to hell, nor could ever indure to be called naturall folke; as ſuch did preſume and wer hypocriticall in their life, ſo the ſame tentation ſticks to them and prevaills over them at death; and they will it may be, ſpeak ſomething of the conſolations of God with their mouths when they

they have no feilling of them in their hearts, and of faith in Christ when yet they never knew the reall exercise of it, and will need like the fooliſh virgins goe forth with the wiſe to meet the bridgroome keeping their lamps till their verie death; that ſame principle of Hypocriſie that made them diſſemble in their life will make them ſpeak many good words for a name at their death; therefore bewar of it, hunt not after a name of religion, and affect not to be accounted and to be called ſomebody, but ſeek to be ſincere, to be reallie that which ye ſeem to be, and when ever a challenge comes for this, rather entertaine it and make ſome good uſe of it then ſhake it off, for though ye could paſſe away undiſcovered by man, God will find you out and diſcover you; and often not a few of ſuch perſons make ſuch diſcoverie of themſelves, that a diſcerning eye will ſee them in their own collours; alwayes I ſay take notice of it as a mightie tentation, when folke take more paines to faird and paint their condition over with fair words and ſhews, then to be reall before God, and be upon your guard againſt it. A 4th tentation is to conceit of ſelfe-righteouſneſſe, and which even ſome holie men at their death have been more troubled with then any other tentation, and it prevaills much with formall profeſſours (ſuch as the Pharaſies wer) who as they lived in conceit of it, ſo readily it cleaves to them at death, ſuch will be readie to ſay, I thank God I keeped the Church, I was never heard with my neighbours, I dealt truely and Juſtly with all men, it was Gods goodneſſe to me, I was aye on the right ſide, I read, prayed, keeped the Sabbath &c. Theſe are good in themſelves I grant, but not to be laid weight upon and lippened to neither in life nor at death as the main fundation of ſalvation and conſolation, therefore guaird againſt it as a tentation when ever Satan comes to ſpeak a good word to you in order to merit or deſerving. The 5th

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and laſt is a tentation to doubting yea to deſperation, which is not ſo frequent I grant, yet it prevaills with ſome who have lived it may be verie ſecure in their life, and when death comes the devil ſayes, ye have never ſought God in earneſt all your dayes, and now tyme is gone the doore is ſhutt he will not hear you, this may thrugh grace be anſwered and it would not be ſtrengthened by refuſeing the offer of Gods grace even then, eſpecially if God call thick, to ſay ſo, and ſome of the ſenſes it may be begin to fail and to be taken away.

The 3d and laſt Queſtion is to inquire at you what think ye will be your thoughts at death? And I ſhall draw forth this alſo into four or fyve; 1. What will ye then think of the world, of all its pleaſures, gaines and honours? In health and proſperitie men have big and high thoughts of this and that vanitie, project and deſigne, but what will ye think of all outward proſperitie, and of barnes full of corne, of cellars full of wyne, and of houſes full of wealth and riches, of high places, honours, credit and repute in the world when death comes to ſummond you to leave them all? The mind will not feed upon them then, the glorie and ſplendor of them will then grow dim and dark, they will then loſe their bloſſome and flowr, the teaſt and ſweet reliſh of them will then quite evaniſh; hath not the experience of many men who did ſweem in pleaſures and abound in wealth and honour, verified the truth of this? Have they not found all then to be but vanitie and vexation of Spirit, and have they not ſome times proclamed them to be ſo? Yea even it may be before death when under ſome great paine or ſickneſſe or ſome quick and ſharpe challenge of conſcience; all the man's riches, pleaſures, and honours could not then eaſe his mind. 2. What will be your thoughts of the cheiffeſt grounds ye have to build your peace on now? Ye can preſume

now

now and have no doubt of your Salvation, but at death your grounds will be narrowly sifted, and in sted of a solid assurance, ye will scarce get a harleing thought of it, to say so, in sted of faith ye will readilie have doubting, and for hope ye will have fear; how many at death have been made to think and even to say, they have been but beguileing themselves? and will not many of you, if God prevent not, think and say so? when ye begin to look on eternitie and Gods Justice, and to find that many things ye have leaned unto, will not then abyd the tryall nor be able to bear the weight of your soules salvation, nor to answer the challenges which they answered, as it might be, in health; Hence is it that many at death will cry for a Minister and for Prayer, that cared little for their Companie and for that dutie alonge their life, and when the Minister is come they will then tell him they can doe nothing, and indeid they can doe nothing till grace friely give both to will and to doe, but this bids you bewar of putting off till death. 3. When ye draw neir your latter end, and death comes to sit downe on your eye lids, when the eyes and ears begin to fail and eternitie stares you in the face (for I suppose the persons to have still the exercise of their Judgment) what will be your thoughts then? may we not Imagine the thoughts of many will be like these of the poor Heathen Emperour *Hadrian*, who bespoke his dislodging soul thus, O poor soul whither art thou goeing? And think with yourselves what ye would give for a Sabbath then, for one Sermon then, and when relations and neighbours will be weeping about you and ye groaning under a burden of sin and fear of wrath, and also of paine and sickness, and faine would ye stay but ye may not, the soul must goe and not one houres delay will be granted, what think ye would ye give then, and at that hour to be suffered to come back againe, and stay a while here? and yet that hour is not far off from

many of you, from ſome not a year, from otherſome it may be not a Moneth yea poſſiblie not a week. 4. What think ye will be the condition of the ſoul when it goes out and diſlodgeth from the bodie, and when the ſentence ſhall be paſſed, and when Legions of Devils ſhall harle and drag the ſoul away to hell the place of Torment that was thinking to goe to heaven; what think ye will be the thoughts of ſuch a ſoul that in the perſons lifetime would have diſdained & ſtormed to hear a Miniſter or any other given it to hell, when it ſhall be thus unexpectedly ſeazed on and hurried thither? Doe ye think Sirs that there are no ſouls in hell, or that few or none at all are in hazard of being there eternally? If ye will deny neither but grant both, doe not then think ye, all they infinitly wrong themſelves who ſecurely drive over their time and think not ſeriouſly on their dieing in the Lord? which is the ſcope of all: This Doctrine layes before you Life and Death, Heaven and Hell, if ye live and die in Chriſt, ye ſhall get life and be eternally bleſſed, but if ye live and die in your ſinnes inſted of life ye ſhall without all doubt meet with death, and ſuch a death as ye heard of in the Lecture, a death that hath the Wyne of the Wrath of God without mixture in the Cup of his indignation, and torment even eternal Torment without any the leaſt intermiſſion or mitigation, whereby ye will be made everlaſtingly moſt miſerable. Laſtlie, is it not think ye of your unſpeakablie great concernment to think ſeriouſly on your living and dieing in the Lord before death come? Let me but put this one queſtion to you; what will be the thoughts of many in Hell, who have gotten fair warning of this ere it come? many of you if grace prevent not will then remember better on this preaching then you will doe a day or two hence, ye may reject and beat back a word now, but ye will not gett it beat back then, but it will take hold of you, it will gall and torment

torment you, the Prophets doe not live for ever, ſayes the Prophet *Zacharie* Chap. 1. but the Word of the Lord will live for ever, it will take hold of them that deſpiſed it, it will take them by the throat, as it wer, and make them gaſpe eternally; The Lord graciouſly knock hard at your hearts by this ſo concerning a truth, that it may have acceſſe to you, and keep you from ſlighting of it; *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord, they reſt from their labours and their works doe follow them.*

SERMON III.

Revel. 14: 13.

Bleſſed are the Dead which die in the Lord, &c.

THere are ſome things of ſuch concernment to us that if we goe ſuteablie, ſeriouſly & ſingly about them, we can be hardly too much in them, and therefore theſe four things that are called mans laſt things, *Death*, *Judgment*, *Heaven* and *Hell*, have been ſo frequently recommended to Chriſtians as the moſt conſtant ſubjects of their Meditation; and among them all, death ought to have the firſt place in order at leaſt, it being the door whereby we enter into Judgment, and as men die ſo they ſhall riſe and may expect a final deciſion and ſentence from the Judge about their eternal ſtate, & the Spirits caſting in this to divert *John* and the Reader a litle from following the ſeries of the Hiſtorie, does put a commendation on it, and ſayes that it is no digreſſion, for his People to beſtow ſome ſerious thoughts on it.

The laſt thing we ſpoke to was a Doctrine from the

words as they lye, that they and they only are bleſſed who die in the Lord; now ere we further proſecut the main uſes of the Doctrine we ſhall ſpeak a word to that which is manifeſtly implyed here, and it is this, that as they are bleſſed who die in the Lord, ſo they are exceedingly miſerable that die out of him in their ſinnes; for the affirming of the one implyes and ſuppoſes the other; and it might follow on the former Doctrine as ane uſe, however its cleirly in the words and commends dieing in Chriſt to you all, and ſerves to ſtirr you up to be ſerious to make that ſure, and therefore we exhort, beſeech, and obteſt you to count it of concernment even of the greateſt concernment unto you, it is to you Men and Women that we ſpeak and not to walls, to timber and ſtones, ſleep not neither let your minds vaig and wander, for we are ſpeaking the words of truth, that many of you may be made to find the truth of too late.

In proſecuting this Doctrine, we ſhall ſpeak a litle to the cleiring of both the branches of it, and then come to the uſe. The firſt branch is, that there are many that die not in Chriſt, this is cleirly implyed in the words; Its looked on as a rare thing in the ſpreading of the Goſpel after the reigne of Antichriſt to find People dieing in the Lord, he is a rare ſo a happie man that dies in him. The ſecond branch of it is, that be who they will that die not in him but die out of him in their ſinnes, they die exceeding miſerably; we ſhall confirme the firſt, and then ſpeak a litle to the explication of the ſecond.

For the firſt, that there are many that die not in Chriſt, it appears from Matth. 7. *verſ.* 22. and from Luke 13. *verſ.* 24. Theſe three will confirme it aboundantly; 1. the plaine words of Scripture where Chriſt ſpeaketh of Heaven as having, for coming to it, a narrow way & a ſtrait gate ſo that few enter in thereat, and of Hell and Deſtruction as having a wide gate and a broad

a broad way into which many enter, and when he ſpeaks of the day of Judgment, he ſayes, many ſhall come to him in that day and ſay, Lord, Lord, open to us, to whom he will ſay depart from me I never knew you, and he will ſett the goats on his left hand and ſend them thence into everlaſting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels; theſe Scriptures ſpeak not only of ſuch as are without the Church, but alſo if not mainly of many viſible Profeſſours, yea even of ſuch as preached in his name, and yet ſay of them that they die not in Chriſt. 2. If ye will look to the ordinary connexion that is betwixt mens living and dieing, ye will find that the way of the moſt part of men declares plainly that they die not in the Lord; for as we ſhew, mens being and living in Chriſt muſt preceid their dieing in him, before they can die in him they muſt needs be in him; we doe not ſay that all muſt be and live ſo many years in him before they can die in him, but that they muſt be ſometime in him before they can die in him, and that they muſt live and put forth ſome acts and breathings of a ſpiritual life, of the life of Faith in him, if it wer but a few words to Gods glorie and for others edification, or a few ſighs, groans, and looks to him; as we may ſee in the theife on the Croſſe though his time was verie ſhort; And if this being and living in Chriſt muſt preceid dieing in him, if ye compare it with the moſt part of your lives, Ah! how ſad a prognoſtick gives it, of what is like to be your way of dieing? How many are there of you that live ſtill in black nature and wer never borne againe? If I could claſſe the lives of the moſt part I would eſſay it. 1. How many are living like Atheiſts not calling upon God at all, caſting off fear and reſtraining Prayer before him? And as theſe live ſo they die for the moſt part either ſecurely or deſperatly. 2. How many live in formalitie and never knew what it was to mortifie the Fleſh, or ſincerely to

aime at the power of godlineſſe, and yet ſayeth the Holie Ghoſt Rom. 8: 13. *If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit mortifie the deads of the body ye shall live*; if grace be not in the heart and Kyth not at all in the converſation, ye cannot warrantablie expect to die in Chriſt; except a man be borne againe he cannot enter into the Kingdome of Heaven, this is a large and great claſſe and takes in all that live and die as they wer borne, and ſeek not after another life then that which they brought with them into the World. 3. How many are there that have ſome outward fairding and paint and yet have no realitie of Religion within? Whereby they mock God and diſſemble with Men: It is to ſuch that Chriſt ſpeakes John 8. 21. and tells them that they ſhall die in their ſinnes, and againſt this ſort of men he denounceth many woes. 4. Are there not many that live without Faith in Chriſt? Without which they cannot poſſiblie pleaſe God neither living nor dieing, and ſhall be damned if they continue ſo, for ſayeth the Lord John 3. v. 18. he that beleives not is condemned alreadie: Now when all theſe Claſſes are laid aſide, there will be but few behind; all which proves aboundantly the truth of the thing, and that there is but too good ground to think that there are manie, verie manie who die not in Chriſt. A third ground of confirmation of this ſad truth may be drawn from the ordinary way that the moſt part die in, and paſſe out of time into eternitie; O! how many die ſecurely, ſtupidly and (as we ſaid before) ſenſeleſly, and are no more affected with the thoughts of the immortalitie of their ſouls then if they had none at all? How many die preſumptouſly confident? how many found their faith of dieing well on wrong grounds? how many die doubtinglie not knowing what ſhall become of them? And how many die deſperatly? So that (alace) there are but few among us that cloſe their eyes like dieing Perſons in Chriſt;

and

and though we will not be peremptour in paſſing Judgment upon, or in cenſureing of particular perſons as to their final ſtate, yet all this ſhews that it is no very common nor ordinary thing to die in the Lord.

As for the ſecond branch of the Doctrine, to witt, that theſe who die out of Chriſt in their ſinnes, die in exceeding great miſerie, It is alſo very clear, for as the happineſſe of them that die in Chriſt is unexpreſſiblie great, ſo the miſerie and unhappineſſe of them that die not in him is alſo inexpreſſible, for they are excluded and ſhut out from God and from all good, and have his wrath, his furious indignation, and his moſt ſever Juſtice perſueing them for ever and ever; we ſhall onlie conſider it brieflie in theſe two generals; 1. They are put out and ſecluded from the greateſt happineſſe that can be Imagined, and that in all the degrees of it. 2. They are concluded and put under the greateſt miſerie that can be conceaved, and that in all the degrees of it. 1. I ſay they are ſhutt out from the greateſt happineſſe, and that is, from the fellowſhip of God who is the cheif good, from converſeing with the Lamb, glorious Angels and Saints, they ſhall not have one Saint in all their Companie, there is not nor ſhall be the leaſt evidence of the love of God among all the thouſands in Hell, not one drop of cold water to coole the tongue of any of them who are tormented in theſe flames, they have Iudgment without the leaſt mixture of mercy, Iam. 1. 13. and that for ever without intermiſſion; they ſhall never have the leaſt glimmering of light nor the leaſt ſlaiking or mitigation of their paine, they ſhall have no reſt night nor day; and which aggreageth all even to the verie hight and extremitie, they have no outgate nor hope of it, but lye in utter deſperatione under that felt eternal torment; it would be ſome lightening to the damned in Hell if their torment wer to continue but for ſome thouſands of years, yea or but for ſome

millions of thousands of years, as poor *Spira* said, that it would have been a comfort to him if Hell had been but for twentie thousand years; but it is for ever. And 2. If we look to the other part of it, they are in this hopeleſſe condition under the greateſt miſerie drinking for ever of the Wyne of the wrath of God without mixture in the cup of his indignation, which ſhall be both their meat and their drink; and their companie ſhall be the Devil and his Angels; O! that we wer ſerious in ſpeaking and hearing and thinking of theſe things; the Ods and Difference is both great and ſtrange, in ſtead of ſhareing in the Glorie of God, of Chriſt, and of his Angels, to be ſhareing of the Torment of the Devil and his Angels; If it be a verie evil, nay the verie worſt condition, for a Perſon to have enimitie at God in the hight, and to have God ane everlaſtingly irreconciliable enemie furiouſly perſueing his quarrel, though without all paſſion in him, yet with wonderful horrour in the perſon that is thus plagued, It cannot ſure be told to the full, how inconceavably evil and miſerable their condition is that die out of Chriſt, nor what the hazard is that many of you are in, in reference to it.

The firſt uſe of this is, for exhorting you not to think it of light or litle concernment how ye die, nor a thing unworthie of your moſt ſerious and painefull endeavours to be made ſure on good grounds that ye ſhall die in him; if it be of great concernment to get heaven and to eſcape hell, to be in Gods companie and not in the devills for ever, to have love and not hatred to God for ever, and to have Gods love to you & not his hatred for ever (for death caſts the ballance); ſett, O! Sett yourſelves ſeriouſlie to obtaine the one and eſhew the other; and there is no way to win at it but by being, living, and dieing in Chriſt.

A 2d uſe, ſerves wonderfullie to check and reprove the ſenſeleſſe ſecure multitude that have the common

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profeſſion of the faith of theſe things, and yet are utterly careleſſe to have this moſt concerning queſtion clearly, diſtinctly, convincingly, and ſatisfieingly anſwered, whither they ſhall die in the Lord? Certainly there are many of you when your ſouls ſhall diſlodge that will find yourſelves exceedingly miſtaken in this matter; O! If we could pitie and lament over the lamentable condition of many of you who are ſo ſenſeleſſe, ſtupid, and unconcerned, that what ever is ſpoken of the life to come and of the neceſſitie of making your peace with God thrugh Jeſus Chriſt, it is as if it wer ſpoken to ſo many ſtocks or ſtones as to any ſuteable effect it hath upon you, for who of many of you quit their prophanneſſe, formalitie, hypocriſie, and ſecuritie? Who thrugh grace mends any thing faultie and amiſſe? Or ſetts more timeouſly and ſeriouſly about the learning of this great leſſon of dieing in the Lord? The ſupine, laſie, and groſſe neglect of all which, bids you look for and lay your account to meet with the deeper, ſorer, and ſader challenges at your death and appearance before Gods terrible tribunall.

But it may be asked here, what is the reaſon that ſo many die out of Chriſt? How can this be, ſeeing they have no happineſſe, but ſo much and ſo great miſerie by it? How cometh it to paſſe that ſo many take the one way of living and dieing out of him, and ſo few choiſe the other way of living to him and of dieing in him? To inſiſt longe and at large in anſwering of this queſtion would lead us to give reaſons why men ſhun and decline the ſtudie of holineſſe and will be prophane, why they deſpyſe the Goſpel and embrace the world and their luſts; but to leave ſuch generalls we ſhall ſpeak a word or two more particularly and cloſſly to this, why it is that ſo few die in the Lord? And the 1 Reaſon is this, becauſe the faith of theſe generall truths that there is a heaven and a hell, a life eternall and a Judgment to come, is ſcarcely receaved

ed by the multitude of the hearers of the Goſpell, yea the very faith of their own dieing in particular (though they know they will die and though experience may teach them the ſame daylie) ſincks not into their hearts; who are they that beleive practically and with particular application that they will die and come to Judgment, and that they ſhall be put into ane eternallie unchangeable condition after death? And if this be not indeed beleived then to allude to the Apoſtles words 1 *Cor.* 15. our preaching is in vaine and your faith is but vaine; that theſe things are not reallie beleived we hinted before when we began to ſpeak on thir words, and the practice of moſt undenyablie proves it; for though all in word profeſſe they beleive that they will die, yet who are they that on the matter mind not to outlive this day, and the next day, and the day following and ſo on? So that in effect it turnes to this, they would live eternallie here; and this is a root-evil or ane evil root that deſtroyes many ſoules; moſt people are like to theſe ſpoken of in the dayes of *Noah*, *Math.* 24. eating and drinking, marying and giving in mariage, ſuffering one day to come and another to goe till death come and ſurpriſe them er they be awar, and then are they confounded and put thrugh other, to ſay ſo, with the very firſt thoughts and appearances of it: if men wer ſeriouſly thinking on death and Judgment and a particular reckoning with God and wer reallie beleiving theſe things, is it poſſible they would thus delyt themſelves in their ſinfull luſts and pleaſures and have their affections ſo glued to a preſent world? No certainly, the thoughts of death and Judgment would putt gall and wormewood in theſe things and imbitter them. A 2d reaſon may be drawn from peoples groſſe miſtakes about the right way of dieing, they take dieing in the Lord to be quite another thing then indeed it is, for even as folke miſtake all other duties, ſo

they

they miſtake this; they take that for repentance, for faith, and for holineſſe, which is not repentance, nor faith, nor holineſſe indeed; ſo they take that to be dieing in the Lord which is not dieing in him: and here we ſhall touch on two or three things which we conceave many take for dieing in the Lord wherein yet they are exceedingly miſtaken. 1. They think if they can die without any publick ſcandal or known ſin, or without challenges, and if they can gett their preſumptuous conceit and good opinion of themſelves keept up to their grave (as if it were eneugh to ſay Lord Lord open to us) and if they can goe away calmly and quietly like theſe ſpoken of, *Pſal.* 73. *verſ.* 4. *Who have no bands in their death*; that then they are well eneugh and die well, but this is a great miſtake. 2. They trow they die well if they die with a ſort of hope that it ſhall be well with them, and for this they will teughly debeat, and when Chriſt comes and tells them they are beguiled they will hardly trow him, but rather as it wer alleadge that he is miſtaken and they are not the men, what? Have we not eaten and drunken in thy preſence, have we not heard thee preach in our ſtreets, have we not been at many preachings and communions? We have alwayes had a good hope towards God and why ſhould we now fear death? O! The ſtrong preſumption that ſome die with? And this is another great miſtake. 3. Some think if they can die after ſome prayers and convictions and that which they think to be repentance, all will be well, theſe things indeed if they wer reall, wer good; but how many play the hypocrit egregiouſly in them? There are not a few that fancy they have the grace of repentance becauſe they have ſome ſadneſſe for ſin, or ſome litle anxietie or a few challenges, who yet never tooke ſeriouſly with the corruption of their nature, and the quarrell that God hath with them on that account, Nor ever fled to Chriſt

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for refuge, but goe away in their fit of carnall ſorrow, and this is another great miſtake. 4. Some lay downe a mould of religion of their own, and if they have a civil life with men, and ſome formalitie of Religion towards God, they think themſelves well enough; how many ſuch are there who thus breck their neck at death? O! ſad miſtake.

A third cauſe of folkes not dieing in Chriſt may be this, that there are many who have ſome right thoughts and apprehenſions of dieing well, but they never ſeriouſly endeavour to bring them to practice, they ſeek not to have their practice anſwerable to their light, they in effect make a priſoner of their light, by putting a guard of corrupt affections about it; for either they take ane abſolute diſpenſation to themſelves, as to ſome particular luſt or ſin, or a libertie for ſuch a time, & when that time is by they intend to quite & abandon ſuch a luſt and to think on death, but they will not quite it yet, nor prepare themſelves for dieing; they muſt needs firſt have their families in ſuch a poſtour, they muſt have their children, or ſuch a child provided for & diſpoſed of, they muſt have ſuch or ſuch a buſſineſſe put by their hand firſt; not knowing or not conſidering that this hardens them and that they dayly become further ſlaves to ſuch things, and that Judgment may ſuprize them unawares, before their time come; there are manie that will not denie but a ſtrict way of holineſſe is requiſite, but they dow not, they cannot prevail with themſelves to fall about it yet; and are like that ill and ſloathful ſervant who becauſe the Lord delayed his comeing, went to eat and drink and to take his paſtime, but his Maſter comes in ane hour when he is not looked for, nor the ſervant awar, & on the ſudden appoints him his portion with Hypocrites; Ah! is it not thus with the moſt part, who if they get ſuch a ſickneſſe put by or ſuch a croſſe diſpenſation over, they think that Chriſt will byd a while longer, and ſo ſtill they putt off till it becomes too late.

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A fourth cauſe may be this, that few are ſerious in goeing about theſe things that concerne death, or in minding what will be their own caſe at death, few verie few make conſcience to examine themſelves and to ſearch their bygone wayes, and therefore they know not their hazard; and among the many advantages of ſelfe-examinatione this is a ſpecial one, that it notablie fitts, thrugh Gods bleſſing, for dieing in the Lord, whereas when it is neglected, ſouls are keeped ſtill ſecurely ſleeping and accounts lye over uncleared and unadjuſted, they neither diſtinctly know their danger nor their need of the remedie; all their Prayers are by gueſſe and at hap hasard, as it wer, neither can they comfort themſelves in any duty they goe about; we name theſe things not only that ye may know them, but that ye may ſhun them, and that ye may withall learne to draw ſome directions and duties out of them for your practice.

We come now to a third and main uſe of the general Doctrine, ſeeing it is of ſuch concernment to die in the Lord, as it hath eternal happineſſe depending upon it, let all of you ſeriouſly ſett yourſelves to fall about ſuch a way of living, as when death comes ye may die in him; As ever ye would attaine to this happineſſe and eſhew this miſerie whereof ye have been hearing, take I ſay, ſuch a way of living as death may find you in him.

To cleir and preſſe this a little I ſhall ſpeak a word to theſe three things; 1. Somewhat further to what dieing in the Lord is; 2. To ſome rules or directions that all, who would ſolidly comfort themſelves in the hope of dieing in the Lord, would make uſe of, and walk by, in their life. 3. To the neceſſitie of takeing theſe directions and walking according to them, even as ye would have the comfort of theſe that die in the Lord; and of doeing this ſpeedily without delay or dallieing.

For the Firſt, we ſhall not inſiſt in it haveing touched

ed on it a little before; what we would say of it now, we shall briefly summ up in these two; 1. To some things that are in the affections that accompanie a person that dies in the Lord, or in some propperties that goe alonge with it. 2. In something of the grounds that these flow from.

For the first, there are these three things or propperties that goe alonge with dieing in the Lord, or with them that die in him, that are exceedingly desyrable; 1. A dieing willinglie and chearfullie, not goeing to death as to a prison, but as through a trance to a palace, Its a dieing as old *Simeon* died, Luke 2, *Now* (saith he) *lettest thou thy servant depart in peace for myne eyes have seen thy Salvation*; though death be the King of terrors, he heasteneth to it; or it is a dieing as *Paul* died, who desired *to be dissolved and to be with Christ, as being best of all*, 2. It is a dieing with holie confidence and boldnesse, not with fear and terrour or anxietie, doubtfullie disputing what will become of them, but being confidently assured of a mansion in Heaven; *We know*, saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. v. 1, 2. *if the earthlie house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God ane house not made with hands eternal in the Heavens; for in this we groan earnestlie, desyreing to be cloathed upon with our house which is from above*; being confident that at death his happie condition was but as it wer beginning; to die in Christ makes a man to sett himselfe boldlie against death and all its terrors. 3. Its a dieing not only with peace and quietnesse but with complacency and satisfaction, and even so that if the soul had its wish it desyres no more, the man does not frett nor complaine that he is taken from a good and plentiful estate, from a fine and commodious dwelling, from friends & relations, from honour and repute in the world &c. but he dies with contentment being fullie satisfied with his right and to looke to the fair inheritance above, this we may see

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in *David*, who ſweetly ſayes & ſings, 2 Sam. 23. 5. *This is all my ſalvation and all my deſyre, although he make not my houſe to grow*: and therefore he will Pſ. 23. walk reſolutlie through the Valley of the ſhadow of death and fear none evil, becauſe the Lord is with him: and indeed it is no ſmal matter to die theſe three wayes, willingly, cheerfully, confidently & boldlie, and with quietneſſe, contentment, and ſatisfaction. But ſecondlie, the grounds that theſe three flow from doe mainlie anſwer and determine the queſtione, for its not a counterfit willingneſſe, nor a natural boldneſſe or manlineſſe of Spirit, nor a carnallie ſecure peace and quietneſſe flowing from ſenſeleſſnes, but ſuch willingneſſe, boldneſſe, & quietneſſe as come and flow from theſe 3 pregnant grounds: 1. From peace with God through Jeſus Chriſt, the ſoul having reallie fled for refuge to Jeſus Chriſt and committed it ſelfe to him; faith ſayes, that is a good, ſure, thorow, and everlaſting bargane, & ſo the man reſts on it and hath peace. 2, From a good conſcience giving a good teſtimonie, which is ane excellent ground to come before Gods Judgment with; the teſtimonie of a good conſcience either in reſpect of ane endeavoured blameleſſe life, or if the man have not ſo a good conſcience in that reſpect, but many failings and ſo many challenges, yet he hath a good conſcience in reſpect of its being ſprinkled with the blood of Jeſus, thrugh whom all his failings and transgreſſions are pardoned, which alſo takes in a good conſcience of ſincere endeavour to ſtudie holineſſe. The third ground is, a livlie and diſtinct frame of Spirit, whereby faith hath ſome preſent acting on Chriſt, and on the everlaſting Covenant even in death, that the ſoul is by and by to meet with, we will not ſay but there is a difference amongſt thir three; the firſt of them is ſimplie and abſolutlie neceſſarie, and the ſecond is neceſſarie alſo in one of the two forementioned reſpects, the third may not be

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alwayes neceſſarie (for a beleiver may die in the rage of a fever, in a fitt of high diſtemper, or in a ſtupifieing palſie) yet it is alwayes to be purſued and ſought after, with ſubmiſſion to Gods bleſſed will, and it conduceth much to the beleivers confidence and comfort, to have ſome preſent actings of faith in a diſtinct way on Chriſt and on the Covenant of grace.

I ſuppoſe now that this is ſuch a ſweet condition to die in, as there is none of you but would deſyre to be in it at your death; but let me ſay it, the moſt part takes not the right way to attaine it; Therefor in the ſecond place let me ſpeake a little to theſe rules and directions that ye muſt needs ſeriouſly, and in the ſtrength of grace endeavour to live by, without which ye cannot with well grounded confidence promiſe to yourſelves theſe comforts at death, and the bleſſedneſſe that followes it.

And for the more cleir proſecuting of this, I ſhall firſt, in a word put by that which is not the way of dieing in the Lord. And then ſecondly, I ſhall at greater length propoſe to you the way wherein ye ſhould walk, in order to the attaining of this deſyreable end.

Firſt then, it is not the way of dieing in the Lord, to die in external quietneſſe, and with all our friends about us, or in a ſort of calmeneſſe with litle paine or ſickneſſe, manie heathens, manie carnal and civil men, and manie hypocrites, have died that way; Its but a common outward thing, and manie may, and doe ſlip quietly into the pitt. Nor 2. Is it to be much taken up with bare wiſhings and deſyreings to die ſo, nay nor with ſome eſteime of dieing in the Lord, it is good indeed in ſo far, to wiſh and deſyre it, and to eſteime of it, but *Balaam* who had a moſt miſerable *exit*, and made a verie wretched end, came that length, Numb. 24. and yet this is a great part of many folks Religion, yea, the almoſt all of

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it, who it may be will now and then commend it when in a good moode. Nor 3. is this the way of dieing in the Lord, to have ſome coldrife Prayers to die ſo, and to be good friends with God, as we uſe to ſpeake, there are none ſo graceleſſe but ſeeing that they muſt needs leave the world, would rather be in Heaven then in Hell, and will readilie have ſome general deſyres after it, and words of Prayer for it, but that will not doe the turne, for *manie will ſeek to enter, that ſhall not be able*; Luke 13. v. 24, many will pray to be taken to Heaven that neve walked, neither loved to walk, in the right way to it; Nor 4. Is this the way of dieing in the Lord, to be takeing ſome paines in the externals of holineſſe, to be hearing preachings, and frequenting Communions, if that be all, it will not doe the turne neither: It will not be ſufficient that ye heard Chriſt preach and ſatt at one table with him; halfeing of holineſſe is no holineſſe, to be almoſt a Chriſtian will not make a Chriſtian indeed, there is a neceſſitie of being a Chriſtian altogither; to have halfe holineſſe, and to be almoſt a Chriſtian onlie, will be but to be halfe ſaved, and that will be indeed no ſalvation, but will period in eternal damnation, and ſo cannot be dieing in the Lord. Nor 5. Is it to die with a perſwaſion in our own mind, but ill grounded, that we are in him and that all ſhall be well, manie take themſelves to be well and in a good and ſafe condition, becauſe they trow it, and fancie that they are ſo, and they are verie unwilling and loath to let themſelves think ill of themſelves: When we ſpeak then of dieing in the Lord, it muſt be ſuch as will abide Gods tryall, aud it is not he that commends himſelfe, but he whom God Commends, that will abyd his tryal and be approven.

But ſecondly, what then will doe it? may you ſay; we ſhall (as we promiſed) commend to you ſome rules to walk by, for attaining this end of dieing in

the Lord; and ye ſhall take them in ſeveral directions, but we will not now in the cloſe of this diſcourſe enter on the particulars, onlie take this word in the general; that all theſe who propoſe this end to themſelves, would previouſly take along with them thir three neceſſarie antecedents; 1. That they have their peace made with God thrugh faith in Chriſt, and that they ſee well they be not living with a ſtanding quarrel betwixt God and them, for its by faith that we are united to him, and without faith we cannot be in him, and ſo cannot poſſiblie die in him. 2. This would be taken alonge, not onlie to have faith in Chriſt, and our peace made with God thrugh him, but to know that we have it, to know in whom we have beleived; It is true this is not eſſential as the former, yet it is hardly poſſible to die comfortably and confidently without it, therefor Chriſtians are exhorted, 2 Pet. 1. *Give diligence to make your calling and election ſure.* 3. That they be exerciſed to keep a good conſcience in all things, and alwayes towards God and towards men, Its impoſſible in ane ordinary way to die well except folkes endeavour ſeriouſly and ſingly to keep a good conſcience along their life, and to ſquair the ſame according to the rule of the word, and walk ſuteablie to their profeſſion; All theſe three are put togither by the Apoſtle *Peter*, 2 Pet. 1. v. 5. He wills them to whom he writes, to adde to their faith the exerciſes of the other graces of the Spirit, then, v. 10. he exhorts them to give diligence to make their calling and election ſure; and then by ſo doeing, he aſſures that ane entrance ſhall be miniſtred to them to the everlaſting Kingdome, which is as if he had ſaid, by faſtening your faith on Chriſt, by the exerciſe of grace, and by ſtudieing to make your calling and election ſure by well doeing, a wide doore ſhall be made to you at death to enter into Heaven, and ye ſhall have the greater comfort and confidence to lay downe your life;

life; whereas on the contrarie when Christians doe much neglect the fastening and fixing of their faith, the exercise of grace, and the makeing of their calling and election sure, the entrie is strait and difficult, and others that altogither neglect these things, doe find the doore quitte shutt and no entrie at all: If there wer no more spoken but these three words, to be in Christ by faith, to live in him by the exercise of faith and other graces, keeping a good conscience towards God and men, and to make your calling and election sure, they might furnish you with work and dutie to take you up all your dayes; and they may also serve to convince and reprove manie who vainely intertaine themselves with the hope and expectation of dieing in Christ, but doe not at all be-take themselves to this way of being, and living in him; even to goe with a blecked face & a stoped mouth to the throne of grace, and cordially close with Christs Offer, being content to adhere to him for righteousnesse, and utterly to renounce their own, and then in a way of diligence in dutie, and by the fruits of a new nature and life, to evidence their union with him; this is the verie marrow and substance of what we would be at, and that which is the hinge of our salvation, even the right exercise of faith for righteousnes, the right exercise of grace for sanctification, and the right setting of ourselves ere death come, to have the grounds of our intereſt sure and clear; But such of you as have taken no paines to walk in this way, but still walk on, and continue in, your own old carnal way, ye cannot warrantably expect the benefites and comforts that flow from faith in Christ, and from walking in him, and these are, to die in him and to reigne with him; now God himselfe blesse this word and make it useful to you.

SERMON IV.

Revel. 14: 13.

Bleſſed are the Dead which die in the Lord, &c.

IT is ane eaſie matter to ſpeak and hear of the moſt ſpiritual and highly concerning truthes, in compariſon of what it is to make them practicable, and hence it cometh to paſſe, that ſo many ſpeake and hear of them, and that ſo few practiſe them, and the neirer that truthes or duties come to preſſe upon us the mortification of our luſts, and to abſtract us from the world, or to prepare us for dieing, we are the loather and the more reluctant to engadge in the practice of them, and to keep cloſſe at it; Its a hard and difficult buſineſſe to be both living and dieing at once; though everie man living may be ſaid to be dieing daylie in ſo far as he is haſtening to it: And therefor ſeeing what followes concernes your practice, and is the maine and moſt material uſe of this great doctrine, let one and other hearken diligently and give ear to what we are to ſay from God on this important ſubject, with a ſerious purpoſe and reſolution to practiſe, for it will not otherwayes be of advantage to you, and ye would ſo prepare yourſelves though grace to hear, as ye may firmely reſolve to keep that which is of ſo great and everlaſting concernment to you.

We left laſt occaſion at ane uſe of exhortation, commending to you the right way of living ſo as when death comes, ye may have ſome well grounded hope of dieing in the Lord; And we propoſed three things in proſecuting this uſe to be ſpoken of. 1. What we called dieing in him, and we ſhew it was to have ſolid faith

faith and cleirneſſe of Intereſt in Chriſt, cheirfulneſſe and comfort, quietneſſe and ſatisfaction in dieing, a moſt deſyreable and comfortable condition when we enter the liſts with death, even to have this confidence that we are in him and ſhall die in him.

We come ſecondly, to ſome directions that are ſo many ſteps in the way to the attaining of this comfortable end of dieing in the Lord, we entred on them in General, and now are to proſecute them a litle further, thrugh the help of Gods grace; Before we could be particular in directions, we ſhew that theſe three things behoved to preceed; 1. There would be flieing to Chriſt by faith, and makeing peace with God thrugh him; 2. There would be endeavouring to make our calling and election ſure by well doeing, for though our Juſtification before God depend not on our cleirneſſe in this, yet much of our comfort and confidence depends on it, and it is no doubt our dutie to labour to make it ſure. 3. There would be a holie walk whereby we may have a good conſcience at Chriſts appearing, for there can never be boldneſſe and confidence where there is a ſtinging conſcience within, and challenges for ſinning againſt light.

To proceed then more particularlie to theſe directions, how to live as ye may die well, wherein if we ſhould be large and ſay all that might be ſaid to this purpoſe, it would lead us to ſpeake of all the duties of holineſſe, and that with reſpect to all the conditions of our life, ſickneſſe and health, proſperitie and adverſitie &c; to our particular and general callings, and to all events; for as we carie in theſe, ſo we may expect to die, but theſe being general we ſhall paſſe them, and onlie propoſe ſome fiye or ſix directions in order to mens dieing in Chriſt, as the great ſcope of this doctrine.

The firſt direction is, ſeek to eſtabliſh yourſelves in the faith of theſe general truths that concerne your

dieing, especially to be established and confirmed in the faith of death, judgment and eternitie, wherein it will be either well or ill with you for evermore; And this is not only to have a general conviction of the truth of these, but by meditation to draw them downe to particular application to yourselves, that ye will die, that after death ye will come to Judgment and be eternallie happie or miserable; for as we said before, one of the great evils that cherisheth Atheisme, is mens living as if they wer never to die; so then it is a fundation of well doeing, solidlie to beleive death, judgment, and eternitie, and they can never live well who lay not this for a ground, that they will die and come to Judgment, and who consider not what will readily be their challenges at death, that they may seek to answer them now, and what may be their tentations, that they may be guarded against them; Therefor ye would be established in the faith of these generals, and endeavour to draw death and judgment neir to you, you would persue them closse in your meditation; Suppose that death wer this verie night approaching you, consider with yourselves if ye durst appear before Gods tribunal to be judged; more of this in our thoughts would help us, thrugh Gods blessing, to mortifie lusts, and to give death litle to doe when it comes; But the truth is, the most part never think seriously on death, and because they desire not another life then the present, they shun to think of death; I commend the necessitie of this to you from the great averseneſse that your carnal hearts and humours have from the serious and stayed thoughts of it, I pose you that are given to pleasure, can ye indure to think on dieing? And you that are glutting and surfetting yourselves with the world, Dow ye abyd to think on that word, *Thou fool this night thy soul shall be taken from thee, and whose shall these things be?* And you that are prophane, dow ye think on that sad sound of the trumpet,

trumpet, ariſe dead and come into Iudgment; that word of *Job* is meet to be caried along with you, *I know thou wilt bring me unto death*, though the good man was miſtaken in thinking he would die at that time, yet he knew he would die ere long, and be brought unto Iudgment after death, and caried along with him the thoughts of it: And if we would be induced to try our prepareing for death by theſe thoughts, how few of us would be found to mind it, though it be of everlaſting concernment? Ah! how few hours are taken to think upon it? if ye were to come before men or ane humane court with a cauſe that much concerned you in the world, how would ye think of it before hand, and think of it againe? and yet the moſt momentuous of theſe are but verie triffles, being compared with this great cauſe and caſe of conſcience, how you ſhall die, and appear before the great God his Judgment ſeat.

The ſecond direction is, that though all duties of holineſſe be requiſit, yet there are ſome particular duties that ye would in a ſpecial manner make conſcience of (without neglecting any other called-for dutie) as having a ſpecial influence on preparation for dieing, and as comeing neireſt (to ſay ſo) to death, though much ſlighted. As 1. the dutie of *ſelfe-ſearching and examination*, we would be verie impartial in ſelfe-examination and in compting with God; If men (as Solomon exhorts) ſhould ſee to the ſtate of their herds and of their flocks, much more ſhould they ſee to the condition of their ſouls: Is it poſſible, think ye, to die confidentlie and comfortablie if ye be not acquainted with the ſtate of your ſpiritual affaires, and endeavour not to have your accounts with God ſtated and adjuſted? If there be a plague on men it is the neglect of this; and if there be ane aw-band and reſtraint on their Spirits from unſuteable latituds and louſneſſe, its the conſcionable practice of this dutie; that which

makes death ſo terrible to many, is their living, ſome 30, ſome 40, ſome 50, ſome 60, years; without having ever endeavoured to fitt their accompts with God, let be to have them diſcharged. 2. The exerciſe of *repentance* (which is alace! a rare thing even among Chriſtians in theſe dayes) is a ſpecial dutie to be gone about in order to our dieing in Chriſt, that when we ſee ourſelves wrong in anie thing (as manie wrongs may be eaſilie found in the forementioned ſearch) we lett them not lye over, but be earneſt with God till we get a diſcharge, and that cannot be gotten till repentance be exerciſed; where this grace of repentance is, it hath faith alwayes with it, and it makes the heart tender, and removes challenges which make death terrible, it is alſo a great enemie to ſecuritie, preſumption, and pryd, and keeps the heart withall melting, and much in pouring out itſelfe before God; the want whereof in theſe dayes Kythes in the coldneſſe of our duties of worſhip, and in the carnalneſſe of our walk; however they that would die in the Lord, would ſtudie to be found much in the exerciſe of this grace (we doe here indifferently deſigne theſe, *duties* or *graces*,) for if repentance be called for when the Kingdome of Heaven is neir, then ſure it is called for, when death is neir, and there is nothing more requiſit then a kindlie penitent heart as a ſpurr to chace to Jeſus Chriſt, when we are to meet with him at death. 3. A third dutie, is the exerciſe of *mortification*, it is a painfull but a profitable dutie, to be crucified to the world, to die to our luſts and carnal delights; by mortification we mean not onlie that which takes away the dominion of ſin, and ſetts on to the ſtudie of holineſſe, but that which plucks up the roots and tapouns of ſin, and ſlayes the motions of it, and as it were, weids it out of the heart, that which puts you to mortifie your diſtempers and paſſions of invye, anger, pryd, inordinat deſyres &c. And to ſeek to

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have your affections heavenlie, which notablie fits for dieing in the Lord. A 4. dutie that would be carefullie practiſed, is *ſobrietie*, let your moderation, ſayeth the Apoſtle, be known to all men, the Lord is at hand, mortification lookes much to things in themſelves ſinful and unlawful, I ſay much, though I will not ſay onlie, and ſobrietie looks to things lawful in themſelves, wherein inſobrietie is the bain and plague of manie, who being ſo glued to the things of a world, and to theſe delyts and pleaſures which are lawful in themſelves, and whereof a moderat uſe is allowed, that they are entangled and fettered with them and made as unfitt for dieing, by their inſobrietie in them, as by their doeing of ſome things that are in themſelves ſinful, O! how doeth inordinat love to children, friends, lands, houſes, farmes, oxen, and to the married wife, unfitt them for dieing, therefor the Apoſtle exhorts Chriſtians, 1 Pet. 1. *To gird up the loins of their mind, to be ſober and hope to the end*; for when men are unſober in the uſe of the creatures, they are like to theſe that have long garments which take the feet from them, as it wer, and impede them in their walking and at their work, when the affections hang looſe and drag on the earth and the things that are in it, and the mind takes libertie to vaig and roave after theſe things, the man cannot be buſie at his main work, or make progreſſe in his Journey to Heaven; but ſobrietie fitts him for his work and makes the way eaſie to him, makes him well content with his houſe or place and ſtation and with whatever is his condition and lot in the world, it ſuffers not his affections to be entangled with them, it makes him *ſo to uſe this world as not abuſeing it*; As the Apoſtle exhorts, 1 Cor. 7. to have a ſort of ſanctified denyedneſſe to a lawful uſe of the creature-comforts, that the heart be not glutted and ſurffetted with them, from which, our bleſſed Lord Jeſus doeth moſt powerfully diſwade, Luke 21. v. 34.

where he sayes, *Take head least at anie time your hearts be overcharged with surffetting and drunkennesse and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares;* where he plainlie insinuats (which is strange and little beleived and considered) that there is ane overcharge by cares about the things of this life lawful in themselves, as well indisposeing and unfitting for death and Judgment, as ane overcharge with surffetting & drunkennesse is. This sobrietie prepares for dieing in the Lord, to which preparation on the contrarie, ane overcharge with worldlie cares is a mightie impediment, as these words of our Lord put beyond all debeat; especiallie when these two are trysted togither, a distempered mind with such worldlie cares within, & manie tentations and stumbling blocks from without.

A third direction is, they that would die in the Lord would carie the thoughts of death along with them, as if every day and moment wer their last, and as if they wer just now to appear before God, and as if they wer holily indifferent what hour or moment he would call upon them, for God hath sett (as to our knowledge of it) no time precisly to our living here; it is observed by some on *Eccles.* 3. that there is a time for everie thing, a time to be borne, a time to die, a time to laugh, and a time to weep, but there is none for living, for none can say I must or I shall live till to morrow, therefore he bids the porter watch, and would have all standing with their Armour on them in a watchfull posture, waiting for their Lords coming that he come not on them unawarse; *nunc age quod moriturus agas*, doe that now which thou wouldest be found doeing when death comes, hath been ane old and excellent saying.

It may be objected or queried here, is it possible that a beleiver can alwayes actually remember Christs coming and carie the thoughts of death along with him? *Answ.* It is in this dutie as in others, as when

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it is ſaid *doe all to the Glorie of God*, it is not ſo to be underſtood as if we could actuallie mind it all-alonge in everie thing we doe, our minds being but finit, and ſo unable actually to mind many things or different things in the ſame inſtant of time or at once, that is impoſſible, but as there is a habituall minding of the glorie of God, ſo there is a habituall minding of Chriſts appearance, which implyes theſe three things. 1. That when in cold blood (to ſay ſo) and at ourſelves, we reſolve to wait for, and carie ourſelves ſutablie to the expectation of his appearing, and to doe nothing that we would ſhun or think ſhame of, or would not deſire to be found doeing, if he wer appearing; which is in effect to be continuallie on our watch. 2. That when ever we take ourſelves napping, we ſtirr up ourſelves to ane actuall minding of it, and endeavour to ſquair the actions of our life accordingly, asking our own hearts, if we durſt doe this or that if he wer to appear, and accordingly to be ſweyed with the aw of his appearing. 3. That in our ordinary walk, we be often reviveing the thoughts of Chriſts appearing, putting ourſelves often in mind of this rule, even to walk ſo as if he wer immediatly to appear; hence beleivers are often ſtiled in the Scripture, waiters for, and lovers of, his appearing; and hence alſo the dutie of watching is ſo frequently commended to them: ſo then we would not have this ſo univerſallie to be underſtood, as if beleivers wer to doe nothing more, nor if it wer ſpoken by a voice from heaven that they would preſently die, or that Chriſt wer preſently to appear, for then they would leave many actions undone, and leave off lawfull Journeys and Voiadges, and other actions they are called to, but the meaning is, that we endeavour to be found in, or at, nothing, we will think ſhame of when he appears, and in all things alwayes to keep a good conſcience, a conſcience void of offence towards God and towards man.

A fourth direction is this, theſe that would die in the Lord would be timeouſly acquainting themſelves with the croſſe of Chriſt and not ſeeking after a pampered life, or to have the world at their will, but learning to fold, bow, and ſtoup to difficulties and ſtraits; not that I would have anie procureing croſſes to themſelves, but as they would not procure them, ſo they would not peremptorly determine to eſhew them when the Lord calls to take them on, and bear them; but 1. they would carie along a reſolution to fold to croſſes when they come. 2. When they come, they would neither with ſinful anxietie, ſeek to ſhun them, nor would they lye downe diſcouradged under them, but denie themſelves, take up their croſſe pleaſantlie, and cheerfullie, and follow Chriſt. 3. They that have perſonal freedome from croſſes would kindlie ſympathiſe with them that are under the croſſe, Hence *Solomon* ſayes, *that it is better to be in the houſe of mourning then in the houſe of feaſting*, Eccleſ. 7. v. 2. there is a greater good to be had there nor in the houſe where there is banquetting, revelling, and carrouſing; The reaſon is, becauſe few living in proſperitie are content and diſpoſed to die, and adverſitie doeth beſt looſe folks grips from the world; O! it is hard to be glutting in the things of the world, and to live in a proſperous and plentiful condition, and not to be withdrawn thereby from ſpiritual things; Therefor is the croſſe and dieing to the world ſo much commended, for litle croſſes are, as it wer, bitts of death or litle deaths and peices of the curſe, as well as death itſelfe is (though by the death of Chriſt they are turned into bleſſings to beleivers) and if we be habituat to theſe litle deaths, there will be a much eaſier yeilding to the great death, and leſſe to doe when it comes.

A fifth direction is, that we ſtudie to die dayly, and it is drawn from the Apoſtles words, 1 Cor. 15 31. *I proteſt by your rejoyceing, which I have in Chriſt Jeſus*

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our Lord, I die daily; which not onlie ſetts out his hazard daylie, but his ſeeking to prevent death, in dieing while he was living and ere death came, and it implyes, 1. a conviction caried along with him of the neceſſitie of dieing. 2. A looking on the continual hazard of dieing; 3. A preparation for, and continual readineſſe to die; and 4. Ane activeneſſe in eſſaying to die, or ane acting of death, in a manner, before death come: We would follow the ſame way and be frequentlie putting ourſelves before Gods barr, and conſidering how we will anſwer deaths call, bowing our ſtubborne humour that it may not be found untractable at death, doeing that everie day that we would be found doeing when death comes, ſtudieing to have all things in that order that we would deſyre to have them in then, and habituating ourſelves (as I ſaid) to dieing; when going to our Prayers in the morning, to put ourſelves in ſuch a poſtour as if we wer no more to goe abroad in the world, and lyeing down at night, as if we wer not to riſe againe in the morning, and when we ſpeak or doe, to ſpeak and doe like men that have not long time to live after our ſpeaking or doeing.

The ſixth and laſt direction ſhall be this, that ye would put in practice what your own conſcience, your light according to the Scriptures, and the meanes ye have, hold out as neceſſarie for makeing and keeping of your peace with God, and the keeping off of a quarrel betwixt him and you; This ordinarily is one of the main challenges that meets folkes at death, that they have ſuſpended the practice of manie things they wer convinced of, that they have ſhifted, delayed, and putt off ſeaſons and opportunities of called-for duties, and have ſitten down on this ſide of them; that they have not reformed ſuch faults as they wer convinced of &c. it is commonly ſaid of lawes, that we had need of one law to make other good lawes be put in execution, and ſo have we need of ſome one direction

rection to help us to make other directions practicable, according to that word, *Eccles.* 9 : 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to doe, doe it with all thy might, for there is no work, nor knowledge, nor wisedome, nor devyce in the grave whither thou goest*; we are all posting on towards our grave, and there is no doeing of duties nor mending of faults there; therefore what ever the light of the word, and of our conscience well informed thereby, cleirs to be dutie we would be serious and diligent in the doeing of it, and in the doeing of it without delay: and if this one thing wer made conscience of, it would doe more, thrugh Gods blessing, then many: your consciences are convinced I suppose, that the former directions are verie helpfull, and that such as live thus will die the better, but alace! Many of you doe not so much as think on them let be practise them; it may be they shall not be in your thoughts till this day eight dayes, and when it is so to what purpose are all directions, for what use serve they? Are they not, think ye, useless unless they be put in practice? Therefor put not by this as a thing of litle concernment; death is the door to heaven, and death is at the door; and living well is the way to dieing well, and as ye would live and die in the Lord, ye would lay weight on these directions, and fall about the practice of them in the strength of his own grace.

But before we proceed any further, though there may be a conviction that what hath been said is all true, yet there will be ane inward murmuring against it with many profain persons & readily two objections will be started by such.

The first objection will probablie be this, if none die well but such as be-take themselves to such a way of living, who will or can die well? Such a life is impossible to us, therefore we will hold on in our own way and hope well; many when they hear such doct-

doctrine are ready to think and say as they did; *John.6.* Who after they had murmured at Christs discourse, said *vers.* 41. *This is a hard saying who can bear it?* We shall by this means, will they say, be restrained in our libertie, we shall thus be putt to haunt alwayes the house of mourning, and never suffered once to laugh or smile (although that be not our meaning, to keep men from being mirry and cheirfull when called to be so, but to keep from being carnall, and to sett just bounds to them in their mirth); But for answer to these mens question, we would; 1. Ask them this Question, is this the truth of God, that such as would die in him must aime and endeavour to live as we have said? Is living well the way to dieing well, and dieing well the gate to Glorie? If so, will it then, think ye, be a satisfieing answer to God to tell him, that though this way of living is the way chalked out by thee for dieing well, yet we cannot close with it, we cannot walk in it, its so uneasie and so narrow a way? If it be Gods way will ye putt it off so? Or will ye carve out another way then God hes carved out to you? 2. Let me ask such, is not the gate strait and the way narrow that leads to heaven and eternall life? Will ye not therefor goe to heaven thrugh such a gate and way? And is not the way of living so as to die well and in the Lord the way to heaven, and must it not have difficultie in it? And yet thirdly let me say to such, that this way is but difficult and uneasie to corrupt nature, to a proud and carnally delicate heart that cannot indure in the least to be disquieted in the enjoyment of its sensuall pleasures and delyts, and to a sinfull selfish humour that will not stoup to God, yet to such as love to walk in this way, all the duties are possible and the difficulties superable thrugh grace, yea it is thorrow-out a most pleasant path and way, *Philip. 4. vers.* 13. *Prov. 3. vers.* 17.

They will secondly object, all yonder things the

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man ſpeaks of may be true, nay we cannot deny but they are true, yet we may be doeing and yet hope thrugh Gods mercie to win to heaven; have not many who have lived even as we doe died well and been ſaved? And ſuch will readily have the thiefe on the croſſe to caſt up, which would in reaſon ſpeak to them for their reclaiming, and from this they profainly conclude that they may hold on their own way, and yet hope to mend and grow better at length and ſo to gett mercie when they die; but for anſwer; 1. O! Thou graceleſſe and profaine wretch is that the uſe thou makes of mercy, even to ſin becauſe God is mercifull, and to ſin that grace may abound? Is that the end of Gods revealing his grace and mercie, to make him a miniſter of ſin? How can ye look mercie in the face that ſo abuſe mercie? And yet O! How ryfe is this among profain ſoules, to ſin becauſe God is mercifull, to abuſe his grace and make him, as I ſaid, a miniſter of ſin? Conſider of it, if ye will dar to look grace and mercie in the face that have thus ſtumbled and brocken your necks on them. Secondly though there be ſome that God hath given mercy to at their death, yet how many are they who have ſinned preſumptouſly and have gotten mercie? The theife on the croſſe, it is true, gott mercie, but did he ever deſpiſe and abuſe Gods grace and mercie as ye doe? It is one thing to ſin out of infirmitie and humblie to pray for, and to expect mercie, and another thing to ſitt warneings, and profainly to turne the grace of God into wantonneſſe, and yet to have a preſumptuous hope of mercie. Thirdly how many are there in hell, and how few are there in heaven who have lived as ye doe? Gods Judgment hath come upon them and ſurpriſed them, ſo that they gott never leave to repent nor ſeek after Gods mercie, and they are now ſmarteing for delaying to imbrace the offer of mercie, and for their deſpiſeing of it, and cannot mend it? How

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manie are like the rich glutton crying in the place of torment, who if they were permitted to ſpeak to you would ſay, goe tell theſe our Brethren that they put not off time, and that they dallie not in their day with the offers of grace and mercie as we did, leaſt they come into this place of torment with us. Fourthlie, Who ever gott mercie to whom their ſin hath not been bitter to them? And will ye continue in that which hath been ſo bitter to others? If ever ye gett mercie ye muſt come to it, thorrow the way of repentance, and by weeping-croſſe, to ſay ſo, and it ſhall be more bitter to you ſoone or ſyne, then all the pleaſure ye had in ſin was ſweet to you.

The third and laſt thing to be ſpoken to, is ſome few Conſiderations to preſſe the neceſſitie of takeing theſe directions, and of walking according to theſe rules, that ye may not be unfruitful hearers but doers of this truth; for it is practice that is the life of Religion, and if anie thing ought to be practiſed, ſure this is it, even to learne the right airt of dieing in the Lord; And therefor that ye may not decline it; Conſider, 1. Whither, or not the authoritie of God and of his Son Jeſus Chriſt layes on this doctrine, if there be a command for it, that all that expect a dieing in Chriſt ſhould live in him, and if to die in him be a dutie, then to make uſe of theſe meanes and directions that conduce to it, muſt lykewayes be a commanded dutie, and theſe muſt be the true and faithful ſayings of God; it is a wonder that ye can have anie thing to ſay againſt them, for ye cannot denie them to be the truths of God, and yet as it is Pſal. 50. ye (manie of you I mean) caſt them behind your backs, ye will not it may be bow a knee to God in prayer when ye goe home, ye will not ſo much as ask yourſelves what poſtour your ſoule is in for all that hath been or can be ſaid; remember that ye will have God and not us to make ane accompt unto; and therefor anie of you that have

conſciences and any the leaſt meaſure of rendernesſe in them, mind theſe duties, or know that ye ſhall, will ye nill ye, be the more unexcuſeable, if we darr confidentlie preſſe any truth upon you, Its this anent dieing in Chriſt, and holineſſe as the way to it, as the ſumme and ſcope of all our preaching, which will onlie doe you good as it workes to this end; And therefore let us with all earneſtneſſe obteſt you to think more ſeriouſlie on your dieing in Chriſt, and in order to that, on your living in him and to him that ye may have boldneſſe at his appearing, otherwayes we doe ſeriouſlie and ſolemnlie proteſt unto you in the Name of God, that you ſhall never ſee his bleſſed face, nor enjoy his bleſſed followſhip.

The ſecond conſideration is taken from your own great advantage, and the mightie concernment that is in giving obedience to theſe directions, though there be a ſecond death to them who make not readie for the firſt, yet there is but one death to all of you as to the final ſentence, & upon this depends Heaven & Hell & the eternal condition of your immortal ſoules, whither they ſhall be under the curſe of God drinking of the cupe of his Wrath for ever, or under his bleſſing drinking the cup of his love for ever, whither they ſhall be in the caſe of enemies, or in the caſe of friends, whither they ſhall enjoy Gods companie or have the companie of Devils; And think ye there is no odds or difference betwixt theſe two, bleſſednesſe and miſerie? and are ye not concerned which of theſe two ſhall befall you and be your lote for ever more, are ye beaſts that have no immortal ſoules? or are ye Heathens that never heard of the right way to Heaven and happineſſe, that ye ſhould thus walk on in the broad way that leads to Hell and deſtruction, and turne your backs upon the narrow way becauſe it is narrow, and ſo willfullie precipitat yourſelves into the bottomleſſe pitt, and into the deep gulfe of Gods curſe and wrath for ever?

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How litle ſoever ye may think of theſe things now; yet ye ſhall, if ye look not to it, to your eternal coſt find the certaine and ſad truth of them one day.

A third Conſideration is drawn from the great work that there is about death, and when it comes to dieing, & when the immortal ſoul muſt be diſlodged & leave the bodie, and will not poſſiblie be gott keeped any longer in it; ye never made ſuch a voyadge, ye never had ſuch a peece of work in hand as this will be found to be, when infirmities of the bodie grow on you a-pace, and at a great height, when the encumberance and faſhrie (to ſay ſo) of the things of the world, when the affection of relations and friends, when eternitie ſtareing you in the face, when the Devil the great accuſer, not onlie of the brethren but of all other men; with his libels waiting on, when the Law in its paſſing the ſentence and curſeing everie transgreſſor, when Chriſts dreadful ſentence, *depart from me ye curſed* &c. are all to be mett with and encountered at once; and when the conſcience within will be clamouring to you that ye wer not at all ſollicitous and careful to eſhew that ſad ſentence; and beſide all theſe ye will yet have a greater partie to deal with then your conſcience; even the great God the juſt and righteous Judge of all the earth; and O! but it be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, and when withal ye ſhall have a multitude of challenges and tentations to enter the liſts with, this will be found another ſort of thing then a Journey to *London*, or a voiadge to *Holland*, *France* or *Spaine*, or to the eaſt or weſt *Indies*; and think ye who have put by and ſpent all your life in vanitie, that ane hour or two, or a litle time at death will be enough for prepareing you to encounter with it? O! ſad and ſoul-ruining miſtake, are there not manie poor wretched ſouls when death comes, who are forced to wiſh, Oh! if we had another lifetime to live, we would ſpend it better, and with ſuch a wiſh

as that, poor ſouls, they ſlip away.

Conſider fourthlie, the connexion that God hath eſtabliſhed betwixt your dieing in the Lord and the following of theſe directions, betwixt holineſſe and happineſſe, now holineſſe is not the ſpeaking of ſome good words when ye come to die, otherwayes why ſhould it be ſo much preſſed in your life? the end of holineſſe is Heaven and happineſſe, and the end of the broad way of profanitie and formalitie, is Hell and deſtruction; It is true, as I have often ſaid, that God may pluck ſome by a miracle of his grace out of the broad way at their death, but they are verie few with whom he deals ſo; the way to deſtruction is broad and eaſie, and manie walk in it; O! how is this roade beaten by multitudes of paſſengers, and uſuallie as men live ſo they die, if they live wickedlie they die accurſedlie and fall into perdition, hence is that proverb, *ſuch a life ſuch ane end*; a man that is worldlie-minded, or preſumptuous and ſelfe-conceated in his life, ordinarlie dies ſo; And can ye promiſe to yourſelves a comfortable death if ye live profainlie or hypocriticallie? be not deceaved God will not be mocked, for if ye ſow to the fleſh alonge your life, ye ſhall moſt certainlie of the fleſh reap corruption at your death; O! know therefore and beleive the abſolute neceſſitie of living well, of living in, and to the Lord, if ye would die well and in the Lord.

Fifthlie, Conſider and think ſeriouſlie upon the great hazard ye are in of ſpiritual Judgments, if ſo be ye neglect holineſſe and the following of theſe directions in your life, be affrayed of blindning, hardning, of deluſion, of a reprobat mind &c, be affrayed that though ye ſhould gett a long time before death, that yet ye may never gett grace to repent who thus delay and put it off ſo long; if ye then would die well and prevent ſuch plagues, live holily, or if ye care not to die miſerably, goe on in your profanitie or in your

your preſumption notwithſtanding of the hazard of being thus plagued, and of periſhing at the laſt, on the fancied hope of mercie? for one of theſe wayes ye muſt live and die; but we ſay againe, conſider what ſpiritual Judgments ye may fall under in your delaying, ye know not but a commiſſion may come forth from God to his word and meſſengers, to make your heart fatt, your eyes blind, and your ears heavie &c. ſuch a ſad commiſſion as the Prophet Iſaiah getts in the ſixth Chapter of his propheſie to many of his then-hearers; It may be a challenge hath been reſiſted, or a motion of the Spirit quenched at this verie time, and who knows but ye may never henceforth meet with another that ſhall doe you good? are there not manie Judgments of this kind rained on ſinners dailie? are not manie preached blind, deaff, and hard, ſo that the plaineſt, cleareſt, and moſt home-preſſed truths have no more influence on them then upon as manie ſtockes or ſtones? and whence is this I pray? Is it not from your not makeing uſe of the light holden forth to you from this Word of God, and from your reſiſting, ſtiffling, and ſmothering of challenges and motions of the Spirit ye have had? becauſe of which God ſmites you with ſenſeleſsneſſe.

Sixtlie, Conſider what poſſible advantage there is or can be in delaying this ſo neceſſarie a work, and what certaine prejudice there is in it, 1. There is no advantage, for the longer ye continue to delay ye are ſtill the further behind, and the further out of the way, and the greater will be the difficultie to gett yourſelves recovered, there will ſtill be more guilt contracted, and moe challenges to deal with, and the greater labour to gett your Spirits put into a good frame which ye have ſo much and ſo long diſtempered; yea, it will be a peice of a begun hell to you, when ye conſider how ye have brought yourſelves to ſuch a woeful neceſſitie of haſtering, mangleing, and ſpoyling all that

work and buſſineſſe that ye ſhould have gone about ſo deliberatlie, orderlie, timeouſlie, and carefullie in the time of your health; ſo that all your advantage will be but more ſin, and that will bring on a greater heap of deſperat ſorrow and wrath. Secondlie, ye will not onlie have no advantage but ye will have much prejudice by it, for beſide what hath been ſaid, ye cannot comfortablie anſwer deaths call and ſummonds to appear before the tribunal of the great Judge; How manie of you if ye wer to die juſt now and never to goe out of this Church alive, how manie are there, I ſay, of you that could not have peace and comfort at your death? If the walls of this houſe wer ſhaking, would not horrour take hold on you, as pangs of a woman in travel? It may be ſome that are beleivers in Chriſt would be ſomewhat diſquieted and a litle ſurpriſed, yet they would ſoone thrugh grace recollect themſelves and be compoſed, but could the moſt part of you lay down your life with peace, calmeneſſe, and comfort if death ſhould thus come upon you now or before to morrow? and you are not ſure but it may, for you know not what may befal you ere ye goe home, nor when ye lye downe if ever ye ſhall riſe againe; And is it poſſible that ye can have peace or comfort on ſolid grounds when death comes, if ye be not found haveing your peace made with God through Jeſus Chriſt, and walking in the way of holineſſe? It will be put poor and cold comfort then, to think that you have made ſuch ane advantagious bargaine in the world, that you have ſuch a land-eſtate or ſo much mony, ſuch a commodious dwelling-houſe, ſo fine orchards or gardings, or ſuch a well furniſhed ſhope &c. that one word will marr all that comfort, *fool this night they ſhall require thy ſoul, and whoſe then ſhall all theſe things be?*

Seventhlie, Conſider the particular croſſes, infirmities, and afflictions ye are under and may be ſhortlie under,

der, which may put you in mind of dieing, and invite you to make for a change to the better; now ye are in health, within a litle ye may fall ſick; now ye are in ſaftie, and by and by ye may be in hazard; doe not ſo many changes call on you aloud to make for ane unchangeable eſtate, and to endeavour to make ſure that it may be a happie one?

And now when we have ſpoken both to directions, and conſiderations preſſing and enforceing the practice of them, for ordering our life and walk with a due regaird to dieing, and to dieing in the Lord; we are affrayed that it ſhall be but as water ſpilt on the ground, and but litle further the conviction and edification of manie of us, which God onlie can prevent; and therefore we ſhall ſhutt up all with a word to two ſorts of you; The 1. is to you that are ſtricken deaff and dead with the ſpiritual Judgments of God, who no more regaird or mind your immortal ſoules then if ye had none at all, who live rather like beaſts then like reaſonable men and women, or like pagans rather then like Chriſtians, what through carnal joveltie and mirth in ſome, what thrugh prophanitie & mocking of pietie in otherſome, what through idleneſſe in a third ſort, what thrugh the earthlie-mindedneſſe & groveling in the world that is in a fourth ſort, and what through ſecuritie, formalitie, and hypocriſie that reignes in the greateſt part; I aſſure you in the name of the Lord, that death is comeing and God will not be mocked, as ye ſow ſo ye ſhall reap; think ye it ſufficient preparation for death, or a ſuteable readineſſe to die, to laugh and ſport and play over your time, or to have your buildings goeing up, and your bargains goeing on? beguile not yourſelves there is a reckoning quicklie coming which will be verie ſad, and manie of you will find yourſelves behind and at a loſſe in the maine buſineſſe: doe not think, Sirs, that we ſpeak thir words for the faſhion, your caſe requires them all, and

therefore yet againe as ye would eſhew the evil and miſerie that followes the ſlighting of ſuch a warning, doe not put it eaſilie and lightlie by you, for the Lords ſake, for it is hugelie above all your greateſt concernes in the world, to look for death and to provyde for it. The ſecond word ſhall be to you that thorrow grace have begun to provide for it and are fallen ſlack, remiſſe and negligent, O! be alarmed and rouſed up to diligence; Alace! but few carefullie and conſcionablie ſtudie the airt of dieing well and in the Lord, and make in anie tollerable meaſure as they ought, for their appearing before Chriſts tribunal; look Chriſtians to the tract of the beſt of your lives, and how unſuteable it is and how ſhort of that it ſhould be, there is (alace!) much carnalneſſe, ruggedneſſe, and untenderneſſe amongſt us, much formalitie and overlineſſe in duties of worſhip, much earthlie-mindedneſſe, much paſſion, much pryd and vanitie; It is a wonder that anie, who have the faith of their appearing before God, ſhould dar to play ſuch untender pranks (to ſay ſo) and to take ſuch unſuteable latitudes to themſelves beſide the rule, and to have ſo groſſe, ſo carnal, and ſo uncircumſpect a walk as manie of us have; Studie more tenderneſſe Chriſtians, for the Lords ſake, otherwayes though you will gett your ſoules for a prey, and will arrive at laſt ſafe at that harbour of reſt prepared for the people of God, yet ye may and will probablie have a verie unpleaſant and uncomfortable voyage not without ſeveral tempeſts and ſtormes ſometimes threatning utter ſhipwrak, and find a verie ſtrait and difficult entring into the port; when death cometh to look you in the face, and when you begin to think of your being ſo near to ane appearance before God, you may be in conſiderable fear; now the Lord himſelfe, whoſe word this is, make it effectual for your edification and advantage through Jeſus Chriſt.

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SERMON V.

Revel. 14: 13.

Bleſſed are the dead, which die in the Lord, &c.

IT hath been ane old ſaying of many, that none can be called bleſſed before their death, though poſſiblie in the ſenſe that ſome Heathens took it, it be not ſound, yet we who are Chriſtians may ſay, if death be not taken in, and if a man be not bleſſed at his death he is not bleſt at all, and though death after a verie ſhort whiles aboad in the world putts men out of time, yet it hath a long traine of eternal conſequents following it, appearance before God in Judgment, and everlaſting well or ill being, are no trivial nor light matters; and yet as men cloſe their eyes in time at death, ſo they may expect the miſerie or comfort that Judgment and eternitie will bring along with them; and it is the great ſcope and deſigne of this Scripture to commend to you dieing well from the bleſſedneſſe that accompanies and followes it.

We wer in the forenoone preſſing, as we could, the practice of ſome directions how to prepare for death, and ſhall now ſpeak a litle to one queſtion ere we proceed to make any further uſe of the doctrine, and it is this.

What ſhall they doe at death who have quite neglected theſe directions, or not ſo minded them as they ſhould have done, and who are brought in a ſurpriſe of providence, ere they be awar, near the border and brink of eternitie, who have but few dayes or rather houres to live and cannot promiſe one to themſelves? A verie concerning queſtion, (and O!

That folk would ſtudie to prevent it by minding the former directions in time) & withall a difficult queſtion to anſwer ſolidly and cautiouſly; for indeed it is not eaſie to ſpeak to dieing perſons (what ever many may think of it) who when they are living will not hear; and therefore let none make a wrong uſe of what ſhall be ſaid to the queſtion, & this certainly is one wrong uſe of it, to delay time and to ſhift preparing for death till it come on you; but firſt, put this queſtion ſeriouſly to yourſelves, how ye ſhould live that ye may not have ſuch a queſtion to ask at your death, and that ye may eſhew the anxietie that ſuch a queſtion hath with it at ſuch a time; ye will very readily ask the queſtion but heartleſlie in ſickneſſe, who in your health putt it off careleſſlie till death ſurpriſe you, and therefore be rather in holy dread of that time when it may be ye will ſcarcelie gett ane hour to think on the buſſineſſe, or it may be gett none to ſpeak to you to give you clearneſſe about it, or poſſiblie ye may not have libertie for paine and ſickneſſe to think on it, or to hear one ſpeak to you anent it, which ſhould in reaſon ſtirr you up by all ſuteable meanes to endeavour to be in a good, meet, and ready poſtour before that time come. But to ſpeak a litle in anſwer to the queſtion, we ſhall diſtinguiſh unpreparedneſſe for dieing in three ſorts or kinds of it, or there may be three ſorts of perſons that may be ſupriſed by death in ane unprepared condition, and to each of theſe we ſhall ſpeak a word. 1. There is one ſort which are abſolutlie and moſt ſinfullie ſo, that never take anie paines at all to be prepared for death till it cometh upon them; we may ſpeak to ſtones in the wall as well as to manie of you who are ſuch. A ſecond ſort, is of theſe who have had ſome tenderneſſe, but they are fallen ſlacke, negligent, and out of a good frame. A third ſort is of ſuch as want feiling and comfort & are without clearneſſe of their intereſt, and fear to die in that condition.

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As for the firſt ſort, we ſay to you, it is no wonder that ye ſlip away ſecurelie, and fall into the pit of deſtruction that live ſenſeleſſlie and ſtupidlie till death come upon you, ye that never think of death till ye and it meet, what can ye expect ſhould be ſpoken to you for your comfort? alwayes we ſhall lay downe ſome grounds to be made uſe of, even in ſuch a deplorable and deſperat-like condition, when folk have quite neglected preparation for death in their health, if ſuch have but one hour to live, they would conſider 1. That repentance is then poſſiblie attainable, they are within tryſting termes with God as long as they are in the land of the living and the ſentence not paſt. Secondlie, That there is then no peace to be had with God, but in the ſame way it is gotten now, that is by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, which goes along with repentance, and by folks betakeing themſelves to a new way of living wer it but in a ſincere reſolution; *Chriſt is the way the truth and the life, none can come to the father but by him*, and without faith there is no union with him, and whoever look for eternal life, muſt have it thrugh faith in him. Thirdlie, That though a perſon wer to live but one hour, ſomewhat of theſe muſt be, ſome faith, ſome repentance, ſome endeavoured clearneſſe of intereſt, ſome peace, ſome holineſſe though it wer but in the bud, ſo as to ſpeak but a few words to God, or to others ſtanding by, as we may ſee in the theife on the croſſe, grace wherever it comes wer it but of one houres age or ſtanding, is grace and hath the ſame virtual ſubſtantial fruits, or fruits in the bud, as I ſaid, that grace of older age and longer ſtanding hath. Yet fourthlie, where ſhort time is, there is need that there be ſome difference from what is ordinarie in the death of Chriſtians of longer ſtanding in the ſtate of grace in purſueing of theſe things; 1. In reſpect of time, to goe the ſpeedilier through them, that is, to run (as it wer) the more

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ſwiftlie and ſpeedily thrugh repentance and ſelfe-examination, fleeing to Chriſt, and the fruits of holineſſe; If time be ſhort theſe would be contracted, not that they would be ſlighted, but there would be endeavouring to put them ſome way togither, The Lord ſayeth, Matth. 11. 12. *The Kingdome of Heaven ſuffers violence, and the violent take it by force*; there muſt be a ſort of violence even in health in this matter but more at death, that is, if they gett not all doubts anſwered they would know there is ane abſolute neceſſitie to be at Chriſt, which muſt putt them to ſtep over theſe particular difficulties; as the preaching of the moral Law in *John's* time forced people ſome way to ſtep over the Ceremonies of the Law to Chriſt, ſo by Analogie, perſons who have been negligent in their life muſt uſe the ſame violence at death, they muſt have ſound repentance and faith, and by theſe betake themſelves to Chriſt ſpeedilie, and this ſpeedineſſe is, as I ſaid, to be underſtood in reſpect of time; theſe things fitt and qualifie for him and would be made uſe of ſpeedilie to unit to him. 2. A difference would be in reſpect of the meaſure, though repentance be in this caſe ſhorter, the humiliation would be deeper, though the challenges be ſhorter, the pangs would be ſo much the ſorer, the perſon would be further downe in ſelfe-loathing and abhorring; regeneration and the new birth in ſuch perſons borne againe ſo verie late, will readilie be with greater paine and ſharper pangs, with higher indignation at ſin and greater hatred at their own evil wayes, then if they had been ſooner regenerated. 3. There would be a difference in reſpect of eagerneſſe and holie broudenneſſe, which would be beyond ordinarie; it is never good to delay repentance, faith, and holineſſe, but yet folkes may come in to Heaven with a ſome-what ſlower pace (to ſay ſo) in health, then when they have putt off and delayed theſe till ſickneſſe

ſickneſſe and death come on them, then they would be in a ſpecial manner alwayes reſtleſſe till they be at a point, 4. Having thus exerciſed faith and repentance, they would die reſolving to be the more in free graces commoun and debt, for if anie of all *Adams* poſteritie be oblidged to God, and bound to be the verie humble ſlaves (if we may ſpeak ſo) of moſt ſoveraignlie free grace, moſt certainlie theſe perſons are moſt ſingularlie ſo, who have been reſcued and ſnatched from death, hell, wrath, and the Devil when he was even readie and about to lay preſentlie his hands on them, and pull them to the pitt with him: And now I ſay againe, none that are in ſuch a condition, nor anie of you all, have anie the leaſt ground of encouradgment given from this doctrine, to putt off or delay faith, repentance, and the ſtudie of holineſſe, let none therefore take anie, leaſt they be put to ſmart for their follie eternallie.

As for the ſecond ſort that have had more tenderneſſe, but are backſlidden and fallen negligent and out of frame, they are to take the ſame way; when death putts them in a flaught, as it wer, and conſcience with challenges ſtairs them in the face, they would renew their repentance and faith in Chriſt, and the fruits of holineſſe, the more ſpeedily and eaggerly, they would be the more humbled, flee the more haſtily to their citie of refuge, come with a more ſtopt mouth before God, and acknowledge grace to be the freer, and allow it to have the greater glorie.

As for the third ſort, who have keeped up more tenderneſſe, and who would faine have their intereſt and peace clear, and to this day could never attaine to it, or if once they had it clear its grown ſomewhat dim and dark, and even in a manner worne away againe, they grow heartleſſe when death comes and ſurpriſes them; to ſuch I would ſay. 1. That beleivers may die without ſenſible comfort and die well,

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for as ſenſible comfort is not eſſentially neceſſarie to folks juſtification, ſo neither to their dieing in Chriſt; folks may die ſleeping, or in a diſtemper, or in a ſpirituall fear, and yet that fear have faith and love in the boſome of it; and that condition which marrs not Chriſtians peace once made with God in their life, and is not ſo ſinfull, may alſo be died in; they may be in the dark and yet die well. Secondly, diſtinguiſh and put a difference betwixt the ſenſe of the joy of the Spirit, and that comfort and joy which a beleiver may have from Gods word of promiſe; beleivers both living and dieing may want the one and have the other; though they have not the flowings of the Spirit in ſenſible comfort and joy, yet they may have ſolid peace and conſolation, becauſe they have Gods word of promiſe to reſt on, who have fled to him for their life, and their conſcience hath ane inward teſtimonie, that they have denied their own righteouſneſſe and betaken them to his, and in this they have peace; elſe how could a beleiver poſſiblie lye downe in anie meaſure of true quietneſſe under deſertion, even for their tryal, it may be, more then for their ſin? And if we look to *David* dieing though we will not peremptourlie determine, yet it is like he had not much comfort, for in theſe that are called his laſt words, 2 Sam. 23. 5. He betakes him to Gods Covenant, though he did not ſo feill the fruits of it, and reſts there as at ane anchor; And therefore thirdlie, they that are in this condition would with the more confidence put themſelves in over upon, and within the compaſſe of, the Covenant, and make their faith the ſickerer becauſe they want ſenſible comfort; and readilie it is and will be ſo with beleivers at that time, for then they are moſt out of conceit with their own righteouſneſſe, and in a holie fear and ſolicitude in themſelves; for as he ſuffers ſome to be the more untender in their life, and therefore makes them walk without

without ſenſible comfort to keep down their vanitie and pryde, ſo may he exerciſe ſome at death. Fourthlie, Let ſuch ſo much the more truſt God with their throwbearing, and reſolve to be the more in his debt, and they never took ſhiping thus in deaths boat that had cauſe to fear to be drowned and caſt away, He is the beleivers God and guide not onlie to death but even throw death; He may goe therefore through the valey of the ſhadow of death and fear none evil Pſ. 23. We come now to add ſome further uſes of the maine doctrine to theſe we made before.

And the firſt uſe is, ſeeing they are happie that die in the Lord, & miſerable that die out of him whatever their externall condition be; 1. Lay the leſſe weight on the comforts of this life, and 2. be the leſſe feared for the afflictions of it O! Beleivers in Chriſt; There are, ye ſee, two parts of this uſe, 1. (To begin with the laſt) If happineſſe be the portion of them that die in the Lord, what needs Beleivers, who have clearneſſe of Intereſt and well grounded hope to die in the Lord, fear the afflictions or be much troubled with the ups and downs of a preſent life? Though they meet with contempt, reproach, povertie, diſgrace, impriſonment, fineing, confineing, exile, manie challenges &c. Theſe have ane end, death will put a period and cloſe to them all; their great happineſſe is not here, it is at the back of death; all your miſeries will be ſoone at ane end, and its a far more exceeding and eternall weight of glorie that is laid up for you; your time here away will not be long, it will be but 30 or 40 years to ſome, 10 or 20 years to otherſome, ſome moe or fewer, and it may be but one yeat to ſome of you, and then our bleſſed Lord Jeſus will come and wipe all tears from your eyes, and the comfortleſſe remembrance of theſe tryalls, troubles, and toſſeings ſhall never enter into heaven with you; its a ſhame that beleivers who have ſuch a hope ſhould

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be so heartlesse when they meet with crosses, and walk so discouradgedly under them. Secondly, seeing happinesse followes after death, lay not much weight on the comforts of this life, what comfort or satisfaction can ye have in them at death? And seeing they can yeeld you no solid satisfaction then, are ye not farr wide, and much mistaken that bestow your travell and paines in seeking satisfaction among creature-comforts, and never labour to enter into his rest; needs there any more be said to fright you from this foolish course but this, even to tell you that ye leave and forsake the fountaine of living waters, and betake yourselves to the cisternes that can hold no water, and which will dreadfullie beguile and disapoint you; what will riches, pleasures, grandour, honours, and great places doe to you at death? these make but a poor happinesse and will soone have ane end, and yet there is no lesson in the world that men and women learne lesse then this; As all creatures say that wisedome is not in them, Job 28, So they all cry with one voice that happinesse is not in them; Its not in riches, for they take to themselves wings and flee away; Its not in honour, for man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beast that perisheth, and he that is high in court to day, may be hanged the morrow; neither is it in pleasures, for the laughter of the fool is *madnesse*, and hath greife and sadnesse of heart with it and even in the midst of it.

A 2d Use is, and it hath other two branches, If happinesse follow them that die in the Lord; 1. It calls for a willingnesse as well as a readinesse to die when ever God calls you beleivers to it. 2. It serves to condemne a generall unwillingnesse to die, and possiblie somewhat of it, even among the people of God. 1. I say if happinesse be in dieing in Christ, then they that are in the way to it should be readie, willing, and chearful to die. And 2. It must be ane exceeding great

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diſtemper when folks dow not hear of death with patience, and it argues ſtronglie that either folk are out of the way, or not thrugh and clear as to their being in the way; Therefor reflect on your condition; what if God ſhould call any of you this night, are ye willing to die? I beleive there is not one amongſt many that could heartilie ſay it, there is ſcarce one among many, but when death comes they would faine ſhift it, I ſpeak not this to condemne the uſe of lawful meanes in ſickneſſe for recovering health, but to check our great loathneſſe and unwillingneſſe to die, which is ſuch that we would alwayes ſuſpend and putt it off; which ſpeaks either; 1. Litle faith of this truth that they are happie who die in the Lord, otherwayes it could not be but if it wer ſolidly beleived, folk would be more willing to die and to be with Chriſt, yea, there would be a deſyre to be there; if it wer teſtified to men by perſons worthie of credit, that there wer a good, pleaſant, and fertile land to be inhabited in ſuch a place of the world, many would repair thither for makeing a good fortune (as ye uſe to call it) in this life, And yet for all Gods teſtimony (who cannot poſſiblie lie nor deceave) of the happineſſe that followes dieing in Chriſt, yet its not beleived, and therefor few are willing or deſyrous to goe through death to enjoy it, very few are like *Paul*, who deſyred to be diſſolved and be with Chriſt which was beſt of all, weakneſſe of faith makes want of willingneſſe to die. Or 2ly, it ſpeaks out great want of love to Jeſus Chriſt, unwillingneſſe to die is no litle ſin, but want of love is greater, when folkes preferre the being with Husband, or Wife, or Children, or Freinds, to being with Chriſt; O! love to Chriſt ſtrangely looſeth the heart from theſe, and makes the ſoul breath after being with him, as that which is beſt of all; Or 3ly, It ſpeaks much earthlie mindedneſſe, and addictedneſſe to the things of a preſent world; hence it is that many

carnal and earthlie minded wretches would never desyre a better life, nor another life then their houſe and bitt of land in quietneſſe, the fellowſhip of their natural relations and other external enjoyments.

For clearing of this uſe further, let us in a word touch on a queſtion or two, 1. If all willingneſſe or deſyre to die be good? 2ly, If a Chriſtian may not ſometime be warrantablie unwilling to die.

For the firſt of theſe, to witt, If all willingneſſe or deſyre to die be good? To cleir it we would diſtinguiſh and put a difference betwixt theſe two, a ſinful and a commendable willingneſſe.

Firſt there is a ſinful willingneſſe or deſyre to die in folkes carnal fitts, and it is threefold, 1. A deſperat willingneſſe; when folkes dow not abyde ſome preſent horrour on their Spirits, or ſome paine of their bodies, or ſome other very heavie and ſharpe croſſe, they will wiſh to be away, and ſome in ſuch fitts diſpatch themſelves by their own hands, ſo *Judas* dought not indure the horrour of his own conſcience, and therefore hanged himſelfe; but this is rather ane unwillingneſſe to ſubmitt to, and bear their preſent lot and caſe, then any willingneſſe to die: the other two are incident to the Godly if not only to them; The 2d willingneſſe then is, when the Godlie have many croſſes that they dow not well bear, and are affrayed that God be diſhonoured thrugh their fainting or other miſcariages, or when they ſee it goeing ill with Gods People and his publick work, and they cannot doe any thing to mend it; they look upon themſelves as uſeleſſe and would faine be away, So *Eljah* 1 Kings 19. prayes, *Lord take away my life*, becauſe they had ſlaine his Prophets, digged down his Altars and he only was left, as he apprehended, and they ſought to take away his life; but the Lord tells him that he was wrong, that he had yet more to doe with him, and that matters wer not ſo ill as he trowed, for he had reſerved

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ſeven Thouſand who had not bowed the knee to *Baal*; Thus ſome eminent godly men in ane evil time, will readily wiſh to be away, they dow not endure to be alwayes fighting, ſtriving, and contending to help and heal, eſpecially ſince they think they can doe no good: And yet ſometimes it is not ſo much the caſe of the publick, as fear of being ſtraitned or diſappointed in ſome one or other particular of their own, that is the great ground of their fainting and wiſhing to be gone, as we may ſee clearly in eminently godlie and faithful *Baruch*, Jer. 45. The 3d willingneſſe to die is, when a diſpenſation or affliction reflects ſore on folkes credit, whither they be preachers or more privat Profeſſours; either ſome ſlip or miſcariage in themſelves, or ſome affront put on them by others, which makes them think they will doe no more good (though it may be ſuch a thing hath come ſinfullie from others), or it may be from want of ſucceſſe in ſome work committed to them, or ſome diſappointment mett with which they may deſyre to have removed, as we ſee in *Jonah* Cap. 3. where he deſires the Lord to take away his life, he conceaving himſelfe as a Prophet to be diſcredited, and he is ſo headſtrong that when the Lord asks him, does thou well to be angrie *Jonah*? He anſwers pettiſhly, I doe well to be angrie even unto the death; where God hints it to be his paſſion that precipitated him, and by the gourd lets him ſee that it was his particular that too much ſwayed him, & that he was not right in his deſyre of death, or in his willingneſſe to die.

For the 2d, The commendable willingneſſe, I ſhall ſhew you what it is by four or five propperties that it hath. 1. Right willingneſſe to die is content to die in proſperitie, and is ſubmiſſive to live in adverſitie; when all things proſper with men, its a very rair thing to ſee them willing to die, though in fitts of croſſe-diſpenſations, they may ſeem to be willing;

and to have a ſubmiſſive mind contented to live in adverſitie, yea, in the mideſt of greateſt troubles that are incumbent or imminent, is as rair: to be as *Paul* was, Philip. 1. 23. content to abyd or goe as God thinks meet, is a ſweet temper and frame of ſoul; to be willing to live ſhamed and reproached, and not to be diſcontented with the down-lookings of honeſt folkes, and to goe through evil report as well as good report, in all things labouring to keep a good conſcience, and in proſperitie, as I ſaid, to be content to leave the world and all that is in it when God calls by death, is a great matter. 2ly, right willingneſſe hath this proppertie, that it flowes not ſo much from a deſyre to be quyte of the troubles of the world, as to enjoy Chriſt and the good which the ſoul hopes for in and with him; it is not becauſe either the perſons own particular croſſes grow, or becauſe confuſions, diſtractions, and contentions in the publick increaſſe, that they covet to be out of that life and to be gone, but becauſe they long to be with Jeſus Chriſt, *Wee* (ſayeth the Apoſtle 2. Cor. 5. v. 4.) *that are in this Tabernacle doe groan being burthened*, and what is the ground? *not that we would be uncloathed but cloathed upon*; not ſo much to gett the infirmities of the bodie laid downe, as to have the glorie promiſed; it is that which ſwayes mainly in the right deſyre of death or willingneſſe to die. 3. Right willingneſſe to die hath much deſyre and endeavour after communion with Chriſt here, and if it cannot come ſoone eneugh (ſo to ſpeake) to full, immediat, and never to be interrupted communion with him in the next life, it ſeeks to make it up by preſſing much after the neereſt communion with him in this life; It is ane evil token when folk are deſyreous to die and to be away, and yet are found neglecting communion with Chriſt while they are living; theſe that are rightly willing to die will be much in deſyre and longing after fellowſhip with Chriſt, and much in the delightful contemplation of Heaven ere it come and

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in their practice tending thitherward, and very loath to doe any thing that may obſtruct that ſo much deſyred fellowſhip; This we may ſee in *David*, in the old Teſtament, and in *Paul* in the New, O! how doe they pray and pant after, and O! what paines are they at to keep communion with God? and how doe they labour alonge all their converſation ſo to behave, that no obſtruction from them may be laid in the way of their ſo much longed-for fellowſhip with him; let none then think that it can be a right willingneſſe to die, that putts not men to be tender in the ſtudie of holineſſe, and of conformitie to Chriſt in their life; Therefore it is ſaid of *Simeon*, who was ſo willing to die, that *he was a juſt and devot man, waiting for the conſolation of Iſrael*; and by him and other ſuch godlie perſons in his time, was the Temple frequented night and day. 4ly, That is right willingneſſe to die that is not by fitts, but continueing and diſtinct and goes upon ſolid grounds, I ſpeak not of ſenſible comfort but of the grounds of faith, of ſome clearneſſe of intereſt, and of ſweet ſubmiſſion to Gods bleſſed will; for though none needs to wonder much of *Simeons* willingneſſe to die when he hath gotten Chriſt in his armes, yet it hath this ſweet ſubmiſſion to God in it.

The 2d Queſtion is, if even beleivers may be unwilling to die? And if this be warrantable? I anſwer, They may be ſometimes unwilling to die and that not unwarrantably; And for clearing of this we ſhall ſpeak to two things. 1. To ane unwillingneſſe to die upon carnal grounds; 2. To ane unwillingneſſe to die upon good grounds; For the firſt, Beleivers may be unwilling to die from a ſinful unpreparedneſſe to die, they may have a loathneſſe to look death in the face throw the conſcience of ſome, yea much carnalneſſe in their life; beſide that there is in all naturallie ane averſneſſe from dieing, beleivers may have ſometimes their own carnal deſignes that may make them unwilling,

but this is ſinful; for where there is a good conſcience ſprinckled with Chriſts blood, ſolid faith, and clearneſſe about our peace with God, in ſo far they will make willingneſſe to die. But 2ly, There is ane approven unwillingneſſe that ſome-times hath been in the Saints, as in *David* and *Hezekiah*, which is rather a ſweet ſubmiſſion to live, then a direct deſire to live, for other reaſons, for if it be a fear about the want of temporal or ſpiritual things for ſoul or bodie, or about any thing that relates to Gods publick work, faith will anſwer theſe; but there are two reaſons that the Saints have gone on, by which they have been induced to this, that made them approven in their unwillingneſſe to die. 1. The great ſtroak and influence that their removeal might have had on the work of God, as it was in *Hezekiah*, *Joſia* and *Paul*, their caſe; if the former two ſhould have been removed, it would very probablie have overturned the Work of God, as *Paul's* removal would have made many ſore hearts amongſt Chriſtians. 2ly, When their dieing in ſuch a caſe, or under ſuch a diſpenſation ſeems to cary ſome blot with it on innocent godlie perſons, or on godlineſſe and the profeſſion of it; As if *Job* ſhould have died in his affliction, it would have confirmed his Freinds in their erronneous opinion or tenet; and *Davids* dieing in the hands of his enemies before he came to the crowne, would have left ſome blemiſh on the faithfulneſſe of God, and on the profeſſion of Religion, and been matter of ſhame and bluſhing to the godly; Therefore ſayes he, *For their ſakes returne thou on high*; And ſo that unwillingneſſe to die that flowes not from reſpect to a mans ſelfe, but from reſpect to the publick work of God, to his glory and others good or either of them, is warrantable.

A 3d Uſe is, which hath alſo two branches, 1. Learne from this Doctrine to try and Judge what true bleſſedneſſe is, it is even to die in the Lord. 2. Learne

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to caſt at that as ane unhappie thing, which conduceth not to this end of dieing in the Lord. Firſt I ſay, if ye would try your own hearts, when they are in a ſpiritual frame, take this as a mark of it, if ye doe really account this to be beſſedneſſe; if ye wer to hear a voice from Heaven, declareing who is the bleſſed man, and if ye had the Spirits Teſtimonie ſealling it, here he is, *bleſſed is he that dies in the Lord*; Its not they that conquer, and overturne, and transferr Kingdomes, that obtaine many victories, and have great ſucceſſe in their atcheivments and undertakeings, that are bleſſed; Its not to be a *Protectour*, or ſole Governour of Nations, that makes a man bleſſed, but this is it, *to die in the Lord*; this is the language of Heaven and that which is layed weight on there, and ſo ſhould be by you. And 2ly, Lay all the things ye can Imagine in this world in the ballance with this, they cannot poſſibly weigh equally with it, let be down weigh it and what followes it; when they are all layed in the ballance with dieing in the Lord, and with the conſequent glory and happineſſe, they are light as a feather, yea lighter then vanity utterly unworthy to be named in a day with theſe; As there is therefore no happineſſe in them ſo ceaſſe to ſeek it in or from them.

A 4th Uſe is, and its of other two branches, If there be a neceſſity of dieing and dieing in the Lord to them that would be happie; There is nothing ſo forcible to preſſe the ſtudie of holineſſe. 2. Nothing ſo forcible to ſcarr from prophanity, which are the great ſcope of all preaching: I ſay conſider this doctrine rightly and it will be found, 1, To be moſt powerfully provocking to holineſſe, the reaſon is, becauſe dieing well, and living well are knitt togither, and nothing can more demonſtrat the abſolute neceſſity of holineſſe, without which none ſhall ſee the Lord; its as neceſſary as peace with God and Heaven, and who ever they be who think not ſo now, when ever they

shall be ſummoned to remove, they shall without all peradventure find it to be ſo. 2ly, Is there any thing more ſcarring at, and deterring from, profanity and a carnal walk? Gather all that the world can afford whither of ſinful pleaſures, or of lawful temporal delyts immoderatly often uſed, and ſuppoſe that ye could come by your very hearts deſyre and wish in them, what will they all advantage you when death comes? to have ſo many thouſands or hundred thouſands of merks, to have ſo much land or ſo many houſes, will doe you no good at death; what will it advantage you to ſpend your time in pleaſure, in the luſts of the flesh, in tipling and drunkenneſſe? And ye that are ſwelled with prid and ambition, and would have all others backing you, and beckning and bowing to you, what, I ſay, will theſe profit you when death shall put ane end to them all, and make ane eternal divorce betwixt you and them, and when ye muſt lye downe amongſt the dead, and when the wormes muſt be a covering to you? Its even a wonder (if ought of this kind could be a wonder to our carnal and profaine hearts) conſidering the neceſſity of dieing and of dieing in the Lord to all that would die well and happily, with the faith and conviction that we generally profeſſe to have of them, that we think ſo litle ſeriouſly of death, and of ſuch a death, and are at ſo litle pains in the ſtudy of holineſſe to prepare for it.

I shall therefore in the laſt place ſpeak a word or two to ſeveral ſorts of perſons, who should be thinking upon, and prepareing for death, but put it far away from them: 1. To them that are young and take a merry life of it, and dow abyde nothing but to be carnally Jovial, ah! poor wantouns, is not death faſt approaching? Will it not be upon you ere ye be aware, and ere many years goe by? Certainly your life will not be eternall, and who knows but your time may be shorter then ye dreame of? The grave

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may be as ſoone filled with you that are younger, healthfuller, and ſtronger, as with the more aged, ſick, and infirme, what reaſon then have ye to be ſo mirry and jovial, when your peace is not made ſure with God? Its a moſt remarkable and alarming word that is ſpoken to you by the Spirit of God, Eccleſ. 11. 9. *Rejoice O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thy heart, in the ſight of thine eyes; but know that for all theſe things God will bring thee into Judgment:* Ye may goe on, if you will at your perril, ſlighting all warneings and admonitions, but be aſſured Death and Judgment are quickly coming when ye will be called to reckon with God, not only for every open, but for every ſecret thing good or evil; Therefore be exhorted to review and to caſt your eye along your youth, and to conſider ſeriouſly how it hath been ſpent, and ſee if there be not reaſon for your takeing the exhortation that followes, *Remember now thy creator in the dayes of thy youth* &c. Eccleſ. 12. 1. and to ſpend ſome more time in thinking of, and prepareing for death; 2ly, To them that are exceeding wiſe in their own generation, very provident for Summer and Winter, and for all ſeaſons of the Year, and who can manage their eſtates very well and put all things in good order for themſelves and for their children, to make them a convenient life in the world, but doe not at all in good earneſt mind ane other life, how many ſuch are there, that are very wiſe for this life, but for the matters of God and their own ſoules are ſtarke fools the verieſt fools in the world? Many like *Martha* (who though a good woman was nevertheleſſe much prevailed over by this diſtemper, albeit it did not reigne in her nor obtaine dominion over her, as it doeth over unregenerat perſons) are careful, cumbred, and troubled about many things, and neglect the one thing that is needful; Is it not a wonder that ſuch very rational and

wise men should waſt all their precious time, except what they ſpend in eating, drinking and ſleeping, upon the things of a preſent life, and not allow ſo much as one hour of all the week to think ſeriouſly on their ſoules and of death? I appeal to your own conſciences if this be reaſonable and a practice worthie of rational men having immortal ſoules capable of eternal happineſſe and miſerie? And if your time be not ſpent on theſe things which are but vanity, and which at death will doe you no good nor profite you, and concerning which you will then be made to cry, *What profite have we of theſe things whereof we are now aſhamed?* 3ly, To ſuch as are frequent in their attendance on publick ordinances, and in the uſe of other commanded meanes, and yet never thought nor beleived their ſoules to be in hazard, nor in good earneſt prepared themſelves for dieing; O! think yet upon your hazard, for that is the firſt ſpring of makeing readie for the remedie, O! ſeek grace to examine yourſelves, to beleive in Chriſt, to repent, and to live as it becomes them that profeſſe themſelves to be dieing perſons; Its really both ſtrange and wonderful how it comes to paſſe that ye can ſo often hear and yet give no obedience to what ye hear, doe ye or can ye think that it is religion enough to hear? Hath not the Scripture ſaid, James 1. *That it is not the hearer, but the doer of the word that is bleſſed in his deed or doeing?* I beſeech you therefore be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only deceaving your own ſoules, or (as the word is) deludeing and playing the Sophiſt with your own ſoules. 4ly, To them that have greater parts and abilities, and higher places and power then others, and have withal moe opportunities to be prepareing for death; who are maſters of families and can command their children and ſervants to read the Scripture, to faſt and pray, and ſeek God; and who know from the word what is right and what is wrong, what is duty and what is ſin,

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and yet are ſo very litle in the practice of theſe directions in order to their preparation for death; Conſider I intreat you what your knowledge, parts, places, and power, will doe to you or advantage you when ye are dieing, if there be not faith and love, and the fruits of both in practice; Its really a wonder that ſo many men ſhould have light in, and conviction of, theſe things, and yet ſhould ſo dallie with their light and conviction and not endeavour to make them practicable. 5ly, To them that are aged and have their one foot as it wer in the grave, who are neir fifty or ſixty, or a very few moe years which not many exceeds, and yet are, even when ſo far on in years, as ſecure and negligent in preparing for death as if it wer ane hundreth years from them; conſider what ye are doeing, age (alace) and years doe not neceſſarly bring along with them more tenderneſſe in ſoul-concernes, for we ſee it in experience often-times, that the more aged men are, the more ſtocked are they in ignorance and ſenſeleſsneſs; certainly if this word ſpeak to any, it ſpeaks to you that ſhould in a manner cary your deaths-cloaths about with you, and be examplary to others in prepareing for death; ye would therefore take it to you. A 6th and the laſt ſort we ſhall ſpeak to, are theſe that are in a poor mean and low condition in the world, for all are not rich and wealthy nor have a plentiful outward condition, many can ſcarcely gett their families maintained, and yet even but few of ſuch (which is a wonder) are ſeriouſly ſeeking after Heaven, and prepareing for dieing in the Lord that leads to it; the rich have a tentation that ye want; If any in the world ſhould ſeek after Heaven it ſhould be you who are poor, and yet how many of you will be miſerable, not only here but alſo eternally hereafter ere ye betake yourſelves to the way of holineſſe? If ye wer wiſe, as ye ought to be, ye would bleſſe God that ever this Goſ-

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pel came among you and was preached to the poor, which hath happineſſe and everlaſting riches in the boſome of it to all that will embrace it: O! take this word to you poor and rich, ye will all moſt certainly lye downe in the grave, but this will make the difference, ye will die happie or accurſed, as ye die in Chriſt or out of him. Finally, I muſt ſay this word to them that have ſome acquaintance with God, and ſome conviction of the feckleſsneſſe and great deficience of their endeavours in prepareing for death, for their both humbleing and further upſtirring to diligence, that there is amongſt us both litle rouſeing of ourſelves, litle haſtening to the comeing of the day of God, litle goeing out to meet the bridegroome; Alace! We will, to ſpeak ſo, take both a putt and a call to make us advance towards death, though we be drawing neirer to it dayly, yet few of us, as I juſt now ſaid, are waiting for, and haſtening unto the comeing of Chriſt and of the day of God.

I ſhall cloſe up all with this one word, it may be that many of us ſhall teaſt of death before we hear ſo much ſpoken of it; take it therefor as ane advertiſement and call from Heaven to mind more that which is ſo much forgotten, and yet ſo neceſſary to be alwayes remembred, even to live ſo as we may die in the Lord Chriſt, and ſo be eternally and unſpeakably bleſſed.

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SERMON VI.

Revel. 14: 13.

Bleſſed are the Dead which die in the Lord, &c.

ALthough we have already ſpoken at greater length on theſe words then at firſt we intended, yet ſomewhat remaines that is uſeful, and which ſeemes to be their maine ſcope; therefore we ſhall inſiſt a litle further. The way that we gather what we are to ſay is by conſidering the Spirits purpoſe and deſigne in this place, which comes in very remarkably, haveing no particular dependance (as would ſeem) on the former words, nor connexion with what followes; what can be the reaſone that betwixt the denunciation of Judgment before, and the Prophecies of Judgment that follow, there is ſuch ane interruption & breaking off from the ſeries of the Hiſtorie made? *I heard a voice ſaying to me, write, bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea ſaith thy Spirit* &c. there muſt ſure be ſome reaſon; We ſhall offer theſe two reaſons that point eſpecially at the ſcope of the Spirit of God and are inſinuated in the words, that will be the grounds of two doctrines; The 1 reaſon is, That the Lord when he is ſpeaking of ſad things to come upon his Church, and and of Judgments to come upon the enemies thereof, caſts in this as a ground of profitable meditation to his people at ſuch a time, ſo that whither we looke to Judgments to come on enemies, or to tryals and tentations his own people are to meet with, this is caſt in ſeaſonably as a practical leſſone plaine in itſelfe, & profitable to them. A 2d reaſon is, that God by ſuch a word,

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when death ſhould be frequent & trouble & confuſion ſhould grow, may comfort and encourage his people, that death may not be bitter nor terrible to them ſince the Lord putts this *motto*, to ſay ſo, on mens dieing in him in the darkeſt and ſadeſt times, that *they are bleſſed.*

Theſe two being the ſcope, the one to prepare them for dieing, and the other to comfort them againſt dieing, they yeeld us theſe two uſeful points of doctrine, the firſt whereof we ſhall ſpeak to at this time, which is this.

Doct. 1, That death and the happineſſe of them that die in the Lord, is a ſuteable and profitable ſubject of the meditation of Gods people, eſpecially in times of difficulty and trouble; This we conceive is clearly implyed in the words, certainly the Spirit that is ſo wiſe, and who moſt opportunely timeth and tryſteth things for the good of his people, would not ſo abruptly have brocken in on this purpoſe at this time, if it wer not very pertinent and ſuteable to ſuch a time; there is not in all this book ſuch a remarkable diverſion from the ſeries of the Hiſtory, having ſuch a word prefixed to it, and ſuch a word affixed and ſubjoyned to it as this; no doubt to ſtirr up Gods people that have this book to read, when they come to this memorable paſſage, to think and conſider of it the more ſeriouſly: To clear the doctrine more generally a litle, we will find that theſe who have been moſt holy, have been moſt frequent in the thoughts and meditation of death, ſo *David* prayes, Pſal. 39. *Lord make me to know mine end, and the number of my dayes, that I may know how frail I am*; and *Moſes*, *So teach us to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts to wiſedome*, Pſ. 90. (the numbering of our dayes, is this, ſerious thinking and meditating on approaching death) We may here alſo look on the example of our bleſſed Lord Jeſus Chriſt, Luke. 9. 31. who ſpeakes at his transfigura-

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tion on the mount with *Moſes and Elias of his deceaſſe, which he was to accomplish at Jeruſalem*; for though there was ſomething peculiar in his death, yet his ſpeaking of it, and prepareing for it, belongeth as a common dutie to us, and ſhould be a paterne to us; And O! how doeth *Solomon* commend the meditating on death, Eccleſ. 7: v. 2. and 11: 8, 9. and Chap. 12. throughout.

But for further and more particular clearing of this doctrine, we ſhall ſpeak a litle to theſe three contained in it; 1. What is meant, when we ſay that death is a ſuteable ſubject of meditation? 2. What profite or advantage comes to the people of God by it? 3. Why doe we ſay it is eſpecially profitable and advantagious to be thought upon in ane evil time?

For the firſt, when we ſpeak of death as a ſuteable ſubject of meditation, It is not to be ſtrictly taken as contradiſtinguiſhed from other things that preceed, accompany, and follow death; But 1. we take in the thoughts of the certaintie of dieing, and the uncertainty of its time and other circumſtances as to us; Its then to think on death as the way of all fleſh, as that which no man can gett a diſcharge from, and of the uncertainty of the time and manner of it, how ſudden and ſurpri[illegible]ng it may be. 2ly, When we ſpeak of the meditation of death, we take in all that accompanies it, the paine and outward deſeaſes whereby men are made unable to doe any profitable work in their generation, as alſo all the challenges, convictions, tentations, terrours, and anxieties that accompanie death, and the eſtimation of things that we ſee dieing men to have; All theſe would be taken in as a part of this meditation. 3ly, When we ſpeak of meditating on death, we mean not that it would be meditated on, only as it is a natural thing after the fall of man, but would conſider and diſtinguiſh it in its ſeveral kinds as its dieing in ſin and dieing in the

Lord.

Lord, the firſt and ſecond death; we would look upon death on the one ſide, as ane effect of the curſe, and on the other ſide, as ſweetned with Gods love and as ane entry into happineſſe: And we would add to this the cauſes of the one and of the other, what it is that makes death miſerable to one, and happy or the entrie to happineſſe to another. 4ly, When we ſpeak of thinking on death we would take in the effects and conſequents of death, our appearing before God, Judgment, and Eternity, that are at the back of death; The entring into an unchangeable eſtate of well or ill being, meeting with a ſentence that is irrevocable, the eternal happineſſe of them that die in Chriſt, the eternal miſerie of them that die in ſin, perfection of Joy, and extremity of ſorrow for ever, which men and Angels are not able to conceave and farleſſe to expreſſe; And when we ſpeak of meditation on death, we ſay its a ſuteable ſubject to be thinking often and frequently on all thir, not only at more ſolemne and ſett times, but even in the midſt of our callings and employments, in the midſt of our Joy, and of our greife and ſadneſſe, to be takeing ſome ſerious lookes of this day that will put ane end to all theſe in the way before ſpoken of; in your youth to be conſidering that this day of darkneſſe is comeing, and in old age eſpecially, when the ſhaddow of death ſitts downe on the eye lids and the ſtrong men begin to bow themſelves &c.

As to the ſecond, To commend this duty to you all conſider what advantage flowes from it, though we ſpoke of meditation in general at another occaſion, and hinted ſomewhat at meditation on death, yet it being ſo frequently ſpoken of in Scripture and ſo profitable to beleivers, we ſhall ſpeak a litle to ſome advantages that will commend the expedience of the duty, as well as the neceſſity of it to you; And 1, Much of the improvement of the great truths we have been

ſpeak-

ſpeaking of to you theſe dayes paſt, depends on your meditation on death, and theſe things that goe before, accompanie, and follow after it; its impoſſible to know a right, and to beleive how great a task and work it is to die well, and what is the happineſſe of them that die ſo, if we be not takeing paines to be cleared and confirmed in it by Scripture and by meditating on it; folkes take but a glance at it in the by, but ſtay not to look on the quartel and controverſie that is betwixt God and them, neither doe they conſider ſeriouſly what is at the back of death, and therefore it ſurpriſeth them when it comes; whereas that man can ſpeak of death boldly and adviſedly that hath been acquainting himſelfe with it before hand. 2ly, There is nothing that readily doeth more heighten the eſtimation of God and of Chriſt then the thoughts of death, the thoughts of it brings folks cloſſer and neerer to his barr, and make them look on him as Judge, they put them to conſider their feckleneſſe, baſeneſſe, and vileneſſe upon the one hand, and the greatneſſe of the Majeſty of God upon the other; O! how ſublimely doe *David* and *Job* ſpeak of God? when in the one word they talke of the grave, and of the cover of wormes there, and in the other word, highly exalt the Majeſty and greatneſſe of God; Meditation on death brings the thoughts of what God is, and of what we are, very neer us, and repreſents to us before hand what he will be found to be at and after death, and what we will be then; whereas on the contrary, it is given as a root of our deſpiſing God, when men put the evil day far away, as no doubt a root of reverence and reſpect to God, is ſerious meditation on death. 3ly, More particularly, look to beleivers converſeing with others that have grace, or that abound in corruption, we will find it exceeding needful, uſeful, and advantagious to carie along the thoughts of death; It would make Chriſtians walk

loveingly and edifieingly with others, loather to doe wrong, more patient when they ſuffered wrongs, and more eaſie to forgive, and more ready to forget wrongs; our carnal humours would not gett ſuch way, if the thoughts of dieing wer ſuteably intertained; and halfe an houres diſcourſe togither with the impreſſion of it on us, thrugh Gods bleſſing, would edifie and profite us mutually, more then many dayes meeting without it could doe. 4ly, In reference to a mans ſelfe: 1. More generally, meditation on death is a moſt quieting and Spirit-ſobering thing, it ſtayes the mind, it diverts from vanities, and removes them from being the object of his perſute, nay it ſomeway crucifies him to them; And hence it is that men are ſeldome or never in a more ſober and in a better frame, then when they are ſeriouſly apprehenſive of death, as ſuppoſe men to be in ſickneſſe, or in danger at Sea or on Land, they will readily be in another frame then ordinarly they uſe to be in, and when the danger or ſtrait is by, that impreſſion weares readily much away; but wer we more in meditation of death, this frame might be more conſtant and laſting. 2ly, More particularly 1. It contributs, thrugh Gods bleſſing, to rectifie a mans Judgment that by orriginal ſin is darkened, and accounteth ill good and good ill, the thoughts of death make a man wiſe, diſcreet, and condeſcending; men while they are in health and without theſe thoughts, will not quite ane inch of their will, they will rather wound their conſcience then their credit; and to get their barnes full and all goeing well with them in the world, wholly takes them up, but the ſerious thoughts of death makes them wiſe to diſcerne and judge of things, therefore *Moſes* joines theſe two togither, thinking on death and the applying of the heart to wiſedome, Pſal. 90. when folkes think not on death, they are cumbered with many things, they rune to ciſternes and turne their back on the fountaine;

taine; whereas ſerious pondering on death, lets the vanity and emptineſſe of theſe things be ſeen; how many ſee we dayly when dieing, counting litle of theſe things they thought much of before, and calling & accounting themſelves fools that ſuffered themſelves to be ſo caried away with them; and however Gods Spirit calls them fooles that make ſuch a choiſe. 2ly, As it inlighteneth the Judgment, ſo it ordereth the affectiones and rules the paſſions, therefore when *Solomon* is ſpeaking to the young man who will be tyed with no bands, he Ironically bids him rejoice and laugh on, but withall wills him to remember that for all theſe things he will come to Judgment, the meditation of Death and Judgment would ſay of laughter thou art mad, and of mirth what doeſt thou? It would make men look on them as vanity, folly, and madneſſe; & theſe thoughts eſpecially would become folkes in proſperity, and in their youth when their humours are more high bended and light; meditation on death is a notable bridle to lightneſſe. 3ly, If we will yet look more particularly forward, Its exceeding profitable to advance mortification, to bring us out of the entanglements of a world, and to help us with ſingleneſſe and denyedneſſe in following Chriſt, thou fool, (ſayes death) this night thy ſoul may be taken from thee, and whoſe ſhall all theſe things be? It makes mens carrouſeing and good fellowſhip (as they call it) teaſtleſſe; conſcience would in that caſe ſpeak and ſay, what if thou die drunken or with the cup in thy hand? this meditation makes a man care litle for the world, riches, pleaſures, and honour; it would make all to grow very unſavoury, in a word, it mortifies theſe three which are the worlds trinity, pride, covetouſneſſe, carnal luſts. 1. It mortifies pryd, as we may ſee in *David*, who ſayes, Pſal. 39. *Lord teach me to know my end and the meaſure of my dayes, that I may know how fraill I am.* And in *Job*, who ſayes *to corruption, it is his*

mother, and to the wormes, they are his Sisters; It puts to say, *dust I am and into dust I shall returne.* 2. It mortifies covetousnesse, for the meditation of death wrings the heart from the things of the world, and gives the man other thoughts to think upon; how many when death approaches are forced to say, they have cumbered themselves with the world and it hes beguiled them. 3. It mortifies carnal pleasures, for what can vaine fleshly lusts doe to men that are dieing? For as merrie as they are now, say these thoughts, they must appear within a litle before God in Judgment, and if this be not a bridle to these lusts, I know not what will be a bridle. 4. It stirrs up to the diligent exercise of all duties, and to the goeing about them soberly and seriously, one preaching or prayer after serious meditation on death would have more weight, and be waited with more advantage, then many others without it; It puts to humiliation, selfe-examination, selfe-searching; it furthers the exercise of the fear of God, and brings the soul to stand in aw of him before whom it is to appear shortly: It furthers repentance and prayer, Job 41:25. *Because of breakings they purifie themselves*; they make themselves for death by repentance, prayer, and the offering of sacrifices even these Heathens in the Ship with *Jonah*; And if meditation on death put profaine men to the forme of Religion, how mnch more will it put beleivers to be serious and spiritual, in the exercise of these duties and in the practice of Religion? And if God give them time and seriousnesse at dieing, their prayers will be more feckful and fervent at that time then before. 5. It is exceeding profitable to work kindly submission to crosse-dispensations, and to make folkes goe softly under them; what will a man care, (carkeingly I mean) that is taken up with meditating on death, for the forefaulture of his estate or to have his house brunt, or his land wasted? He knows death.

death will put ane end to all theſe things. 6. As it fitts for all duties and reſtraines from all vices, ſo it exceedingly prepares for death itſelfe which is the great ſcope; *Solomon* deſcribes ſickneſſe and old age, Eccl. 12. to make the young man readie for death ere it come, and if there wer no other advantage by meditation on death, this is no ſmall one, not to be ſurpriſed with it: Yea, it ſome way alſo mitigats the bitterneſſe of death, ſo that its not ſo terrible to them that have been thinking on it ſeriouſly, as it is to others who have never made it the ſubject of their meditation? And what wonder is it to ſee many either mightily terrified or very ſtupid at death, ſince they never ſtudied the leſſon of dieing before it came on them?

But as to the 3d, Why adde we this, that it is eſpecially advantagious in evil times? Which ſeems to be the very ſcope of the words, and the godly ſuch as *David* and others have thought it ſo; we doe not ſay that meditation on death is eſpecially profitable and advantagious in ill times, as if it wer not to be thought on in times of proſperity and peace, but that it is exceeding neceſſary, and ſingularly profitable in ane evil time, and in ſuch ane one as we now live in; And the great neceſſity and advantage of this ariſeth from three things that accompanie ane evil time; 1. Many ſnairs and tentations; in ane ill time fleſh and blood is ready to poſtpone a good conſcience and to preferre ſelfe preſervation; now living in the meditation of death guards againſt that; if the tentation ſay, man ſpare or ſave thyſelfe, the ſoul that is thinking on death will ſay, I may ſoone loſſe my good conſcience by yeilding to ſuch a thing for preſervation of ſelfe, and yet it may be myſelfe ſhall not live a year after it, and though I ſhould live twentie yet ſhall I be brought to compt for it, And therefor I will rather hazard on the loſſe of any thing, yea of life itſelfe, then by wounding or ſhip-wracking my

conſcience on provocking God; Hence the Apoſtle tells us, 2 Cor. 5. that he was not ſwayed with outward things. 2. Another evil accompanies ane evil time, and its carnal ſorrow, fainting, perplexity, diſcouradgment; meditation on death mitigats theſe, It ſayes that theſe things, or any other thing the Godly can ſuffer, are not eternal, It ſweetneth our greife, it diverts the mind from carnal thoughts to that which is more profitable, it eaſeth the mind, and layeth the ſtormes, and calmeth the confuſions, that outward difficulties and troubles raiſe and awake in it, and gives a profitable uſe of ſad things. 3ly, There is in ane evil time ordinarly, much confuſion and diſtraction; that is downe which we think ſhould be up, and that is up which we think ſhould be downe, and our mindes are ready to ſtagger and reill to and fro like a drunken man, becauſe of theſe confuſions; but the thoughts of death ſtay the mind, and ſay, that death er long will bring all theſe things to ane end or elſe ane end to us, and will bring them all to be recognoſced and judged over againe; To this purpoſe compare, v. 16, and 17. of Eccleſ. 3. where *Solomon* ſayes, *I ſaw the place of Judgment that wickedneſſe was there, and the place of righteouſneſſe that iniquitie was there*; And what does comfort him againſt this? *I ſaid in my heart, God will Judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time there for every purpoſe and for every work*; oftentimes there is not a ſeaſone for things here, but at death there is a ſeaſon for every thing, all ſentences that have been wrongouſly paſt here will be reduced there, the conſideration of this ſtayes his heart and comforts him.

The Uſes are two, The 1ſt is by way of exhortation, to commend this excellent though much ſlighted duty, not only meditation in the general, but meditation in particular on this ſubject of death; folkes have often as litle mind of this duty as if it wer not in the word of God, and yet it is frequently called for there, and

and if in any generation, then in this, wherein there is ſo much confuſion, turneing of things up ſyde downe, and reilling to and fro; ſo many ſnairs and ſo many grounds of greife and ſorrow; when ſo many are carnally weighted and dejected, and ſo many are declineing and goeing wrong: And (as we ſhew before) we think that this text relats to this time of the World, the time of Gods beginning to execute his Judgments on Antichriſt before the full harveſt and vintage come; and therefor we would ſpeak to this uſe a litle more particularly, becauſe its very uſefull and a notable mean to make you goe profitably about the practice of all that we have ſpoken to this purpoſe; for it puts us in mind of theſe directions for right living in order to dieing, and it holds us at them; without the minding of death, there can be no minding of them, for theſe that mind not the end can never mind the midſes; becauſe, I ſay, its thus uſeful, We ſhall therefore for further clearing of it ſpeak a litle to two things; 1. To ſome directions or rules, ſhewing how ye ſhould think on death. 2. To ſome helps and means thereto.

For the firſt, ye remember when we ſaid death was a ſuteable ſubject of meditation, we took in death in its circumſtances, concomitants, and kinds; And our firſt direction or rule ſhall be this, be particular in your meditation, let it not be abſtracted from yourſelfe in particular, Its not enough to take it for granted that death is common to all; So does *Job*, cap. 30. 23. *I know that thou ſhalt bring me to death*, and ſo does *David*, Pſ. 39. *Lord teach me to know mine end and the number of my dayes, how frail I am*; goe thrugh all the concomitants of death, and conſider what may be your caſe at death, what will be your challenges, tentations, and thoughts; and what will be the effects and conſequents of death to you, when ye muſt with theſe ſame eyes and none other for you behold and face

your Judge. 2ly, Caſt a reflexe look on yourſelves and your own way in meditation, when ye look to that way that prepares one to die well, look back and ſee if ſuch a preparation be in you, conſider how your way ſutes with that which the Scripture holds out to be the way, if ſuch a challenge may meet you at death, and what courſe is taken with it to anſwer or prevent it; this was *Jobs* way Chap. 31. where he tells us that he durſt not ſlight the cauſe of his man-ſervant or maid-ſervant when they contended with him, for then he ſhould not have had a good anſwer to his judge, & that if he had done otherwayes, it would have marred his boldneſſe. 3ly, Labour to have your affections moved in your meditation on death; This is a cheife end of meditation; otherwayes we will but run to and fro, and roave up and downe to informe the Judgment, and cary the thoughts of death as a common place along with us, but will gett no more good of it; the ſpecial thing is to have ſomewhat dropeing from it that may melt the heart, as it was with *David*, Pſal. 77. *I thought on God and was troubled*; and Pſal. 63. *My ſoul ſhall be filled as with marrow and fattneſſe*; there is ſomething like this in meditating on death, it affects the heart with terrour, when the ſoul thinks on dieing without clearneſſe of intereſt; It affects the heart with comfort and joy, when the ſoul is clear in its intereſt; to think on dieing in Chriſt ſo as thereby to be advanced a ſtep nearer unto it, and to drink in what we have been thinking upon, that is the truly profitable thinking on ſuch a thing; the meditation that is without affecting of the heart, is like the chewing of meat that is preſently ſpitt out againe and not ſwallowed down and digeſted; or to the looking only on what is profitable without makeing any further uſe of it: Such, I ſay, is all our preaching, hearing, ſpeaking, and thinking of death, when they doe not affect the heart. 4ly, Study to be practical in your meditation,

meditation, that is, to have it tending to ſome profitable uſe in your practice as its end; when ye have found out ſuch a thing to be wrong, preſently to ſett about the amending of it; when ye have found out ſome thing ſpiritually profitable, reſolutly to goe about it and all the meanes to attaine it. 5ly and laſtly, Seek to be much in prayer to God, and in dependance on him for direction in this particular, goe about meditation on death as a duty commanded by God, with prayer to him and with dependance on him for his aſſiſtance and his bleſſing on it, many look not on the meditation of death in particular as a peculiar duty, and therefor its ſo much ſlighted: When we commend it to you as a duty, we mean theſe three things; 1. That ye ſhould look upon it as required of God, and as being uſeful and profitable as well as any other duty: 2ly, That ye ſhould goe about it as in his preſence, ordinarly folk take a greater latitude in meditation then in prayer, but ye would remember and conſider that he is witneſſe to your meditation as well as to your prayers, that he is the great ſubject of it, that it is laid on by his command, that ſucceable meditation is and muſt be wrought by his Spirit, and that ye will and muſt count to him for your wandrings in it, as well as in prayer. 3ly, That ye ſhould take in all, at leaſt, the general circumſtances of it pointed at before, that ye ſhould take time to it, and betake yourſelves to it of ſet purpoſe, and even now and then when poſſibly ye might have ſome other thing to doe that is not neceſſary for the time; and that ye ſhould by prayer ſeek Gods guiding in this particular duty as well as in any other duty, as *Moſes* doeth Pſal. 90. *Teach us to number our dayes:* Be not frighted from it by the apprehended difficulty of it, for as meditation in the general is hard and difficult, ſo is the particular meditation of death even a ſubject that we are naturally very averſe from, therefore *David* Prayes, Pſal. 39.

Lord teach me to know mine end, &c. and indeed, more frequent and habitual exerciſe and practiſe of it, would, thrugh Gods bleſſing, make it more eaſy.

For the 2d, Becauſe there is difficulty in this duty as we have juſt now hinted, we ſhall therefore propoſe or point at a few things that may be helps to it; There is nothing we have moe motives to, nor moe memorandums of (to ſay ſo) then of this, take then theſe helps. 1. Conſider ſeriouſly the frequent deaths and burials among you every day, whereof ye are wittneſſes and at which ye are preſent, and poſſibly of ſeveral younger, healthier, and ſtronger then yourſelves, and of whom it might have been thought not many dayes ſince, they would have outlived you: And then reflect upon yourſelves and ſee if ye be prepared for death, when ye are in your houſes, or goeing in the ſtreets, and hear the bell giving notice of the death of ſuch and ſuch perſons, or ſee the corpſes caried forth to their burial place, think on theſe things, for they are helpful: Therefore *Solomon* ſayes, *Better is the day of death then of ones birth*, and he gives the reaſon, *for the living will lay it to heart*, that is, the living ſhould lay it to heart. 2ly, Look unto, and conſider well, your own infirmities, ſickneſſes, and diſeaſes of one kind or another: There are none but they have the ſeed of fewer or of moe diſeaſes in them, beſides fitts of ſickneſſe that befal them now and then, and what is the language of all theſe but this? *Duſt thou art, and unto duſt ſhalt thou returne*: When folkes have in their bodies the beginnings of rottenneſſe or of a gangerine, they will ſpread; ye would hear all theſe infirmities, diſeaſes, and diſtempers crying aloud upon you that ye will and muſt die, for theſe cry to you every day as that man was cryed unto by one whom he appointed to cry at his doore every morneing, *thou art mortal*. 3ly, Conſider the extraordinary events that befal many men and women,

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ſome are ſuddenly ſtricken downe with palſies, ſome fall downe and never riſe, ſome goe abroad and never returne, ſome are ſtricken with fury and madneſſe; and are any of us exempted from theſe or any of them? 4ly, We commend to you frequent reading of, and meditating on, theſe Scriptures that ſpeak of death, and of other bookes that treat of that ſubject, and ſett forth moſt lively the ſhortneſſe of mans life; be often reading of the death of the Saints, many are rather taken up with reading vaine Romances or Stories, that are unprofitable in compariſon of this; and others are, it may be, taken up with myſterious, dark, doubtful, and litle edifieing queſtions and debats. 5ly, We commend to you to think ſeriouſly upon the names that death getts in Scripture, and the compariſons whereby it is there holden forth, for there ar not many things that we can readily mention or meet with, which may not ſerve to put us in mind of dieing; doe men put off their cloathes? Death is compared to that, 2 Cor. 5. doe we lye downe in our beds to take reſt? Death is alſo compared to that *Iſay* 57. verſ. 2. where the Prophet ſpeaking of the righteous, ſayeth, *He ſhall enter into peace, they ſhall reſt in their beds*: So to the ſame purpoſe death is compared to a ſleep, one generation goes and another comes and every one ſleeps their ſleep Pſal. 76. v. 5. would ye but reflect when ye are goeing to bed and conſider what poſtour ye are lyeing downe in, and from this bethink yourſelves what is out of order, and how ye may be ſuteably affected with it, and raiſe up in the morneing with a reſolution to practiſe accordingly, it wer a profitable meditation; death is alſo called, *the way of all fleſh*, and can we reckon our age or number our years, but it muſt at leaſt ſhould put us in mind of death that is faſt comeing? Yea, can we ſo much as breath (which is one of the moſt ordinary things) but it muſt or at leaſt might put us in

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mind of death? *Thou takeſt away their breath, they die and returne to their duſt*, ſayes the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 104. 29. If there wer but a ſtop put to this continual breathing of ours, then our life ſhould be quickly found to be but as a vapour that goes up and returnes not againe, that appeareth but for a litle time and then vaniſheth away, as *James* ſayes, cap. 4. 14. So that we want not ſufficient occaſions to putt us and keep us in mind of death; but alace! We want heart and affection to the thing, and ſpiritual-mindedneſſe to make uſe of theſe occaſiones; Alwayes we leave it on you not only as a duty, but as a very profitable duty, to meditate more on death and to make uſe of theſe and the like means to help you to it, and the Lord himſelfe bleſſe them to you.

A 2d Uſe is for repreofe and conviction, and O! what ground of reproof and challenge does it bring along with it? Wer this the very time of our goeing to die, and of our appearance before our judge, how many of us can ſay, we have made conſcience of thinking on our laſt end? So that the Lord may expoſtulat with us, as he did with his people of old, Deut. 32. as with a fooliſh people and unwiſe, O! *that they wer wiſe, O! that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their latter end*; many may ſadly ſay, that they ſcarcely ever reckoned it among their duties, nor the neglect of it among their ſinnes and grounds of challenge, and we fear, which is yet worſe and more ſad, that it may be ſaid of many, that they doe not reſolve to ranke and place it amongſt their duties? But if ye will not be prevailed with, to make it and mind it as your duty, be aſſured it ſhall be your ſin and ye ſhall have it for your challenge; What? Have ye not the command of God enjoyning it? Hath not the Saints practiſeing of it ſo much, ſome weight with you? The plainneſſe of the duty will make your guilt the greater and you the more inexcuſable in your neglecting it; there are none of us but we may goe home with many challenges for our being

being ſo much intangled with the things of the world; and for the levity, unſtayedneſſe, unſoberneſſe, and carnalneſſe of our Spirits, which make us think ſo litle and ſpeak ſo litle of dieing; and if any thoughts of it occurre now and then to our minds, they ſink not, they affect not, they leave not ſuteable impreſſions: If ye would eſſay it ſeriouſly ye ſhould find the fruit of it, it ſhould further holineſſe, it ſhould ſober and compoſe you, and fitt you for any thing that may be comeing in ane ill time, for doeing and for ſuffering as ye ſhould be called to it, and for death itſelfe; God himſelfe give you ſo to eſſay it, as ye may find the bleſſed fruit and advantage of it.

SERMON VII.

Revel. 14: 13.

Bleſſed are the dead, which die in the Lord, &c.

SInce ſin entered into the world, death hath been one of the moſt terrible things that the children of men have to meet with, even the moſt terrible of all terrible things; and indeed it is no wonder that they who know not of ane other and better life to come, nor of the way how to come at it, eſteime ſo of it; *It* is called by *Job* cap. 18: 19. *The King of terrors*, all other terrors are but petty and inconſiderable in reſpect of this; and it is one of the beleiving-Chriſtian his great Priviledges, that he is armed for death, and that death is diſarmed as to him; Death is made a kindly friend to the beleiver, and the terror of it is taken away; & that which the ſtouteſt dar not, dow not, compoſedly look in the face (though in a fitt of manlineſſe as they

they call it, or rather of deſperatneſſe indeed, ſome will endeavour to brave it out againſt death and to bear downe the terror of it) the true Chriſtian only thrugh faith in Chriſt is a victor over even over this enemie *death*: The ſcope of theſe words as we ſhew, is, that the Lord knowing how in theſe calamities & troubles that wer comeing, death would be frequent, and that many of the bodies of his Saints would goe among the reſt, though their death be very precious in his ſight; And knowing alſo how deſpicable their death would be in the eyes of the prophane world; and how that they would be accounted the only wiſe and happy men that could beſt ſhift ſuffering for Chriſt and for his truth; and knowing withal how tempting this would be unto them, he premits this ſeaſonable and ſweet word of comfort, *Bleſſed are the dead, which die in the Lord*, &c. as if he had ſaid, let not beleivers in Chriſt think much of death, it will not marr their happineſſe but ſhall rather further and haſten it: So that this word is given to ſtrengthen and comfort the godly againſt ſuch ane evil time.

From which ground we propoſe this ſecond doctrine: That God hath fully furniſhed the beleiver in him with comfort and encouradgment againſt the terriblneſſe of death, ſo that though death be terrible in itſelfe, yet the beleiver hes good and ſufficient ground of encouradgment againſt it, and may quietly and comfortably die when God calls him, where and however it ſhall be; there is nothing in death that needs to fear him, the Word of God hath given him notable grounds of comfort and encouragment to bear him through it moſt heartſomely, and in the faith of that word he ſhould walk confidently and comfortably throw the valey of the ſhaddow of death and fear none ill; There are two things in this doctrine much to the ſame purpoſe: 1. That the Lord allowes the beleiver to be comforted in his death, and therefore

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hes allowed him grounds of ſtrong conſolation. 2. That the beleiver who hath theſe grounds, ſhould make uſe of them to bear him chearfully and comfortably thrugh death; ſo the Lord ſpeaking of Death and Judgment, Luke 21. 28. ſayes to, and commands, beleivers in him, *When ye ſhall ſee theſe things come to paſſe, then looke up and lift up your heads for the day of your redemption draweth nigh*, beſide many other commands that are frequent in the Scriptures to this purpoſe; and how many of the Saints reſting on and improveing theſe grounds have died moſt willingly, pleaſantly, comfortably, and joyfully? Take for inſtance old *Simeon*, who ſweetly ſayes, Luke 2. *Now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in peace, &c.* He begs leave to be gone; And if ye look to *Paul*, O! how earneſtly does he long for his paſſe and dimiſſion, and how heartily does he welcome the thoughts of it? Philip. 1: 21. To clear the doctrine a litle, we ſhall ſpeake ſomewhat to theſe two things. 1 What are the things that ordinarly make death terrible. 2. What are the grounds of comfort and refreſhing, or the refreſhful conſiderations that beleivers have in the way of grace againſt theſe grounds of terrour, and the latter will be found very far greater then the former; only take this word of caution or warning, that we ſpeak not of death ſo, as if it wer comfortable to die ſimply, or as if it wer ſo to all; no not ſo, for its terrible to all them that die in ſin and out of Chriſt; but to them that beleive in him, and take his own way to this bleſſed end of dieing in him, to all them and to them only, is death comfortable and refreſhing, and to none others.

But 1. As to theſe things that make death terrible and ſo much to be feared, they are eſpecially theſe five. 1. There is ſomething natural in death that makes it terrible, and that is, the diſſolution of that intime, cloſſe, and ſtrait union, which is betwixt the ſoul

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and the body; which ſeparation of theſe two great intimates being contrarie to nature, cannot but be abhorrent and terrible to it; and death withal, in its large extent, being a part and fruit of the curſe, and a bitter fruit of mans departure from God, its no wonder it be terrible. 2ly, There is ſomething in death that is penal; as it is the wages of ſin (juſt now hinted) it hath challenges flowing from the law with it, which ſpeake in the conſcience; this is the fruit of ſin, and hath a right with it to dominion over the ſinner flowing from the breach of the Law of God; and wer there no more then this in death it might make it terrible to all; Hence its ſaid, 1 Cor. 15: 20. that *the ſting of death is ſin*, becauſe it wer nothing to die if there wer no challenge for ſin in it; *and the ſtrength of ſin is the Law*, becauſe the Law curſeth every one that continues not in all things that are written in it to dõe them, Gal. 3. 10. So that by this meanes death hath dominion over all, and brings all as in their natural condition under wrath. 3ly, There is ſomething that is accidental (if we may ſo ſpeak) in death, and that is, the greatneſſe and greivouſneſſe of paine that ordinarly takes hold of men and women when death as a King of terrors draws near; and ſometimes ſome other circumſtances concurre to make it terrible, as namely, that it comes at ſuch a time, very ſurpriſeingly, that it comes by ſuch a ſort of ſickneſſe that it may be is loathſome and ſomewhat thought ſhame of, that it tryſts the perſon in ſuch a place and among ſuch a company, and it may be at diſtance from all friends and familiars. 4ly, There is ane uncowthneſſe and ſtrangeneſſe in the thing, that makes it terrible; the man that now is a dieing never died before, and none can tell him to the full and to the life what and how great a thing it is to lay downe his life; a thing which he never experienced before; for his thoughts, affections, delights, deſires, and deſignes are all much changed and altered from

from what they wer; Yea, that wherein he had pleasure is possibly his bane and torment; his thoughts of the world are quite another thing then sometime they wer; It is then no wonder that folkes scar and be very fearful to adventure on a voyage, whereof none can give them a particular and exact account as having sailed it before them, and with which they themselves have never been acquainted, and which hath such terrible effects, especially where faith in Christ is wanting. 5ly, That which accompanies and followes death makes it terrible, if it wer to goe to the dust as the beast doeth, it wer nothing so terrible, but to have ane immortal soul that must appear befor the tribunal of the great God, and must goe through the hands of his holy severe Justice, where the least sin will draw on damnation, and where the sentence thats once past is never to be revocked; O! what a concerning and terrible thing is that? And however while men are in health they think but litle of it, yet it hath a broad look at death: Nay if you will consider men as men, much more as having some light of the Gospel, ye would think it matter of admiration, that the serious thoughts of what followeth after death, doeth not putt them quite beside themselves, and fright them out of their witts; However, to die carelessly and without satisfaction anent ane interest in Christ, is doubtlesse a most terrible thing.

In the 2d place, If ye look to the allowance that beleivers have, and to their grounds of comfort against these things that are terrible in death, ye will see them to be far greater and stronger then they are terrible; For clearing whereof, Consider, 1. The grounds of the beleivers peace and comfort in dieing. 2. The fruits that flow from these grounds, which are exceeding refreshing and encouradging, and which ye would carefully gather and lay up against the time of dieing, and take such a way of living as ye may have right to them when ye come to die.

First then for the grounds of beleivers peace and comfort, consider these, 1. Gods over-ruleing providence in the least circumstance that concernes a beleivers death, *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints*, Psal. 116. v. 15. He lookes to their death as a matter of special concernment, the time, the sickness, the kind of death, whither a violent or natural, a lingring or sudden death, are all determined & concluded with him. *I said*, sayes *David*, *thou art my God, my times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hand of mine enemies*, Psal. 31. 15. his interest in God sweetneth all to him, and it also comforts him against the persecution of enemies, that it was not in mens hand to putt ane end to his life when they pleased, but in Gods. 2ly, Consider our Lord Jesus his special commission in reference to death as he is Mediator, whom God hath furnished with all power in Heaven and Earth; Therefore when *John* is affrayed to die Revel. 1. v. 18. *He laid his hand on him, and said unto him fear not, I have the keyes of Hell and of Death*: The godly need not be surprised with it, as if it could seaze or take hold of them without commission, for death hath not the keyes of itselfe in keeping, but he beares them all; the world cannot take the bodily life of a Saint from him, till he grant a commission for that effect: Is it not then very comfortable to be in such a blessed estate about which he doeth in a special manner order and command all? Most certainly it is. A 3d ground of consolation, is taken from our Lords satisfaction and death; and this is a maine one which hath many grounds of comfort in it, he died and was laid in the grave; Hence 1, He hath satisfied the Law and taken away the curse, 2 Cor. 5. v. last. *He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousnesse of God in him: Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.* Gal. 3. 13. *Blotting out the hand-writing of ordi-*

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nances that was againſt us, and that was contrary to us, taking it out of the way and nailing it to his croſſe; and haveing ſpoiled principalities and powers, he made a ſhew of them openly triumphing over them in it, Col. 2: 14, 15. his death is our victory over death, he diſarmed the Devil by his dieing, and became the death of death, as it is, Hoſea 13. *O death I will be thy plagues, O grave I will be thy deſtruction*; He by lyeing in the grave hath ſweetned it to beleivers, ſo that they need not fear to lye where he lay. 2. His reſurrection compleats the conſolation, it ſhewes that death is his captive, that it prevailed not over him, but that he prevailed over it and ſpoiled it of its power; ſo that beleivers may ſweetly ſing, *O death where is thy ſting? O grave where is thy victory? Thanks be to God who hath given us the victory*, thrugh Chriſts reſurrection, he having ſatisfied for them and in their roome; this is the ground of the Apoſtles triumph, Rom. 8. 33. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that juſtifies, who ſhall condemne? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen againe*; Let the Law, Juſtice, the Devil, and ſin come forth, they have no juſt ground of challenge or plea againſt the beleiver, for the debt is payed, Chriſt is dead and riſen and hath gote a diſcharge; this is the fundation of a beleivers comfort, conſidering that Chriſt died to prevent all right in any party or perſon to challenge or implead him. 3. His interceſſion yet further compleats the conſolation, for he hath not left the beleiver to die his alone nor to live his alone, but the benefits of his purchaſe are made forth-comeing for him, according to his prayer, John 17. 24. (& he is the ſame now in Heaven that he was on earth) where he ſayeth, *Father, I will that theſe whom thou haſt given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory*: The ſumme of his interceſſion, is to gett beleivers made conquerours, and it is not fully ſatisfied till they be compleatly ſo; This is a very great ground of

comfort, that when the beleiver cannot pray for himſelfe, and poſſibly his ſenſes fail and are gone, and the prayers of others can be but litle refreſhing, that even then he is reached by the benefite of Chriſts interceſſion. A 4th ground, is the conſideration of Gods Covenant, and of his love and faithfulneſſe in keeping Covenant, even in and through death, when *David* 2 Sam. 23: 5. is about to comfort himſelfe againſt death (which ſeems to be his ſcope in theſe words) he draws his comfort from this ground, *that God hath made with him ane everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure*: And the Covenant holds forth five propperties in God, that doe moſt ſtrongly comfort againſt death: 1. The *Love* of God, that is ſtronger then death, for death will never overcome it, but it overcomes death; *Who ſhall ſeparat us from the Love of God*, ſayeth the Apoſtle, Rom. 8: 37. *ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſſe, or perſecution &c? Nay in all theſe things, we are more then conquerours through him that loved us*: The love of God getts the victory, and gives the beleiver the victory over all not only in life but in death, it being of infinitly broad extent and of everlaſting duration. 2. His *Faithfulneſſe* in this Covenant is plighted to the beleiver, which death takes not away, hence God is ſaid to be *the God not of the dead, but of the living*; Though *Abraham* be dead yet is he his God ſtill, the covenant-relation is not diſſolved, but as he is faithful in keeping Covenant to him while he is alive, ſo is he at death, which is the prefixed terme for makeing all the promiſes of the Covenant fully forthcomeing, and for entring beleivers in poſſeſſion of them. A 3d propperty, is Gods *Wiſedome* in frameing the Covenant ſo ſuteably, that it comforts not only in life but at death, therefore its ſaid to be *ordered in all things*, the promiſes of grace and mercy in the Covenant, are not only to give pardon here alonge the beleivers life, but aſſured quietneſſe at death, even though ſenſe and feiling be gone,

gone. A 4th propperty, is the *Juſtice* of God, which though it ſeem to be moſt terrible, yet is it comfortable to beleivers againſt death, *Henceforth is laid up for me*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 Tim. 4. 8. *a crowne of righteouſneſſe, which God the righteous judge ſhall give to me at that day*: For it is juſt with God to give to beleivers what Chriſt hath bought and purchaſed at ſo dear a rate for them, to give them comfort who have betaken themſelves to him for it; for though he gives nothing to beleivers on the accompt of their merit, yet there is a ſuteableneſſe and proportionableneſſe by which he walks towards them, and without all doubt Chriſt hath merited theſe great things for them, which God in Juſtice is oblidged to him to beſtow on them The 5th and laſt propperty, is the *Power* of God, which is engadged for the keeping beleivers to ſalvation, 1 Pet. 1: 5. he hath ſpoken the word and he can and will make it good, and there is nothing wherein his power ſhines forth more conſpicuouſly, then in their ſupportance and through-bearing in their death, when tentations are readily ſtrongeſt. A 5th ground, is the begun operation and work of the Spirit of God, conſidered either as his comfortable work, as he is the Spirit of adoption bearing witneſſe with their Spirits, or as it is his ſanctifieing and mortifieing work, killing inward luſts, or as it is his ſtrengthning or quickning work, whereby he keeps life in the beleiver, and gives him ane earneſt of that which is comeing; the more of theſe he hath he may the more quietly and comfortably die, the ſeed of God is in him and is keept ſtill alive in him; And now ſince God in his providence, Chriſt in his death, reſurrection, interceſſion, and adminiſtration of his offices, Gods Covenant and all his propperties, with the work of his Spirit, are all ingadged for the beleiver; what more can be required for his comfortable through-bearing in death? And yet all theſe are Gods allowance on him, even on

every one that hath made his peace with God through Jesus Christ; are they not then, O! are they not blessed that die in the Lord?

In the 2d place, take some comfortable considerations as so many fruits that spring from these grounds, or as so many fruits of Gods love and everlasting Covenant. 1. God gives charge to his Angels to attend on beleivers at death, for convoying their soules to the bosome of *Abraham*, Luk. 16. for if Angels be ministring Spirits to page and wait on them in their life, they are much more so at their death; God is so tender of them that he hath Angels moe then one waiting on them; And though this come not up the length of the former grounds of comfort, springing more immediatly from the Father, the Sone, and the Holy Spirit, yet its exceeding comfortable when neither Minister nor Friend can comfort, that they have glorious Angels to be with them for ever, to convoy them to Heaven, which is by them accounted ane honourable peice of service. 2. The present happinesse wherewith the soul is possessed on the back of death, (for its immediatly caried as I said, to the bosome of *Abraham*, or rather to the bosome of Jesus Christ) Take a word of it in these two (which we spoke to more largely before,) 1. They have a perfect freedome from all ills of this life, no sin, no challenge, no accusation, no crosse, no difficulty, no weight, all tears are wiped from their eyes, sorrow and sighing flee away, they have absolute freedome from all the disquietnesse that is here: 2. They are brought to the possession of their hope, they are brought to the immediat injoyment of God and of Christ as man visible, they are furnished with all desyreable perfections, nothing is now in part, all is perfect, they are perfect in knowledge, they have a clear resolution to all their doubts anent things which we disput long about here with much contention, and seldome come to a clearly satisfieing

fieing close; a glance of God and of Christ fully satisfieth as to all these; There is ane admission to all the priviledges of Heaven, a place given among them that stand by, a sitting on Thrones with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob*, *Moses*, *Samuel*, *David*, and with the rest of the Prophets; with *Paul*, *James*, *John*, and the rest of the Apostles, where they behold the face of God and of the Lamb, and are amongst his attendants serveing him alwayes without any the least wearinesse, weight, or burden, without any difficulty or indisposition, and blessing and praising him for ever and ever; And is not this a most heartsome and comfortable life and lot? May not a beleiver then yeild to death, yea and make it very welcome on this ground? Considering what a miserable world he lives in, and how eminently, aboundantly, and superexcellently all the vaine and evanishing shaddowes and shews here away are made up, by what is most real, solid, substantial, satisfieing, and abiding there. There is 3ly, the resurrection of beleivers bodies; though this tabernacle be dissolved and goe to the dust, yet up again it must; and that part of *Isaias* his songe, Cap. 26. is then eminently verified, *Thy dead men shall live, togither with my dead body shall they arise; awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust, for their dew is as the dew of herbes, and the earth shall cast out the dead*: As in winter the herbes are not seen, yet the roots remaine in the ground and they rise againe in the spring, so (sayeth faith resting on the word of promise) shall the bodies of the godly and these that lye downe mortal rise immortal, having agility and aptitude to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes; these bodies that wer sown in corruption & dishonour, and which after a while lyeing in the ground become very loathsome, shall be raised in incorruption and glory, even conforme to the glorious body of Jesus Christ; these bodies that wer sown in weakneſse, even such weakneſse that they could not

goe on their own feet to the grave, nay that wer without all life, motion, ſenſe, and feiling, ſhall be raiſed in power, as you may ſee at greater length in theſe excellently ſweet and comfortable words of the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. 15. wherein not only he clears the great truth of the reſurrection, but alſo ſhewes what grounds of comfort himſelfe and other beleivers had againſt death in it. 4ly and laſtly, Conſider what will be the ſouls and the bodies caſe when that deſyreable day of the reſurrection comes, when theſe two old intimats ſhall meet togither, and as it wer renew their acquaintance againe in much better condition then they parted, there will be no more a wreſtling thenceforth betwixt fleſh and ſpirit, but a holy harmony in ane unit and joint enjoying of God, in ane unit and joint delighting in, and ſerving of God, and in ane unit and joint ſatisfaction in God and in being with God for evermore, *for we ſhall be for ever with the Lord*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 Theſſ. 4. *Wherefore*, ſayeth he, *comfort one another with theſe words*; As indeed there is good and non-ſuch ground to doe: Conſider withall the great honour they will have at Judgment, and the happineſſe following it. To returne then to what we propoſed, ſeeing beleivers in Chriſt have ſuch pregnant and impregnable grounds to comfort them againſt death, and ſeeing ſuch ſweet and paſſing-excellent fruits flow from theſe grounds, and ſince there is ſuch a begun good at death that hath no end, may they not be very quiet in their life and at their death, and be exceedingly comforted, whatever be the time, the place, or manner, that God in his wiſedome ſhall think fitt to call them by death out of this preſent evil world?

We come now to the Uſes of this ſweet point of doctrine; And the firſt uſe is of exhortation to beleivers: 1. To lay up this comfort, and 2ly, To bleſſe God for this comfort, that he hath provided ſo very

very well for you both in this life, and at and after your death; 3ly, Bleſſe him that ever he was graciouſly pleaſed to bring you to this happy condition, when he might have left you altogither comfortleſſe both in life and death, O! bleſſe him that he hath given his Sonne Jeſus Chriſt, that he is come, and that grace is through him extended that broad as to take you in: It ſhould make you cry with holy *David* in a tranſport of admiration, *what am I, and what is my fathers houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto*: 2 Sam. 7. and with him to ſay, *I bleſſe the Lord that hath given me counſel*, Pſal 16,

But 2ly, There are two uſes we would ſpeak a litle more particularly to, the firſt whereof, is to exhort you to that which is the ſumme of all we have ſpoken to you from theſe words, even to ſtudy to live ſo as ye may die in Chriſt, which death, hath ſo many and ſo ſtrong grounds of conſolation waiting it, that all the world cannot poſſibly parallel or equal them; If there wer not another motive to preſſe you to faith in Chriſt, and to mortification, and to the makeing of your calling and election ſure, this is ſufficient, that theſe things have ſuch comforts at death and againſt it, which are the moſt uncontravertibly ſure, ſtable, and laſting grounds of comfort; other grounds of comfort that goe quite dry and evaniſh at death, are but miſerable comforters, and like *Job's* winter-brookes of water, that in ſummer diſappoint the weary traveller, and ſend him away aſhamed; but theſe comforts can guard the heart againſt the law, againſt challenges for ſin, and againſt the Devil; nay let us ſuppoſe, that there wer millions of Devils, and of challenges for ſin, and of laws transgreſſed thereby, to ſpeak and paſſe ſentence againſt the beleiver in Chriſt, there is mighty and mervelous ground of comfort for him againſt them all here, he may appear and appeal and confidently ſay, there are moe with me

then againſt me; death to him wants its ſting, and ſin its ſtrength, and he may ſtop over the bound-rode (to ſay ſo) and border of time into eternity, with a ſong of praiſe and triumph in his mouth, and die as quietly and confidently as if he wer to lye downe in his bed, as it is Iſa. 57. v. 1, 2. yea, with a great deal more quietneſſe, confidence, and chearfulneſſe: Therefore wer ye to choiſe a way of living, let it be this, even to live ſo as ye may die in Chriſt; This is, as I ſaid, the great ſcope of all that we have ſpoken from theſe words, even to ſtirr you up to live ſo as ye may be happy at your death, and that is to die in him: I ſhall propoſe but one conſideration to inforce this upon you, and its this, that way of living and dieing hath with it ane alteration of the nature of all things; when a man is ane enemy to God, all things are accurſed to him, but when he is befreinded to God and in good termes with him, all things are bleſſed to him, and work togither for his good, Rom. 8. v. 28. and death comes in amongſt theſe all things; *All things are yours*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. 3. at the cloſe, *whither Paul, or Cephas, life, or death, things preſent, or things to come*, they are all at your ſervice, they are all yours as to the bleſt uſe of them; they work togither for your good, and prove all contributive and ſubſervient to your bringing to glory.

The 2d Uſe on the other hand, is to lett all of you ſee what great prejudice ye ſuffer, and what diſadvantage ye lye under, that live not ſo as ye may die in Chriſt; ye have nothing to doe with any the leaſt of all theſe conſolations, and therefore in the name of the Lord ye are inhibited and diſcharged to medle with them; See that none of you who reſolve not to reſt on Chriſt by faith, to live holily, and to ſhew forth his praiſe, by a ſhineing and exemplary converſation, dar to preſume to put forth your hand to touch theſe conſolations; that terrible word in the 7. of *Jeremie*,

mie, calls for your consideration, *Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsly, and come and stand before me in this House, and say we are delivered to doe all these abominations?* Will ye take your own way of prophane living, and yet expect any benefite of my Covenant, or any saveing fruit of my grace; As God reckoned with profaine *Israel*, so shall he reckon with you, and shall separat you from his people unto a curse, and the anger of God shall smoak against you; not one graceless sinner shall be permitted to joine himselfe with, or to lurke amongst, the great company and congregation of these godly; Angels shall separat you from them, and the sentence of the judge shall separat you from him and them with that doolful, *depart from me, ye workers of iniquity*; and that sentence will be as terrible to you as the godlies sentence will be comfortable to them, *Come ye blessed of my Father* &c. Take notice of this all ye that think ye would faine die well, (and no mervel, for so did prophane *Balaam* desyre to die the death of the righteous) but have no care to live well; when all this doctrine is summed up, it will draw your happinesse on this very hinge and bring it to this issue, whither ye will indeed in the Lords strength sett yourselves to live so as ye may die in Christ, then in this case all these consolations, even all the consolations of the Gospel, shall be yours, but not one of them all is yours otherwayes; To them that die in the Lord and to them only, is happinesse promised, but on the contrary to all them that live not to him, and die not in him, God is ane enemy in life and in death, his curse followes them here, and cleaves closse to them as a girdle doeth to the loines of a man in the grave, so that they shall never be able to shake it off; sins and challenges shall then be multiplied, death shall then putt forth its stinge and sin its strength; the grave shall then obtaine full victory over them, it shall feed on them;

them; but it shall not be so with the godly, it shall have no dominion over them as it hath over the wicked that die in their sinnes and out of Christ, death and the curse make a morsal, as it wer, of all that live and die out of Christ, it eats them up & consumes them for evermore; when the first death is over and gone, the second death takes hold of them and never lets goe its hold; so that death will still, even through all eternity pursue the quarrel against them, And therefore let me shutt up all with two words; The 1st whereof is to you who make conscience of being and living in Christ, though ye come short of that which ye much covet and long to be at, and is called for from you, which is your burden and affliction; yet consider what a comfortable allowance ye have from God, who is the God of all consolation, and be comforted in it; what ever be your lot and condition in the world, be what it will or may be, a litle time will put it by and to ane end; Therefore I say, take encouragment from these grounds of consolation that God hath given you against the terribleness of death, and walk so as ye may not marr your own comfort; and withall, blesse God who hath given you such good ground of hope, ye have more to make a truely comfortable life to you, then all the Kings and great men in the earth have that are out of Christ; ye may be very sinfully defective in this much called-for duty of blessing God, who hath provided so notably well for you, and may robe him of the glory that is infinitly due to him from you, on many O! very many accounts, if ye looke not to it.

The 2d word, is to all of you whom we would earnestly beseech, for the Lords sake, and as ye prize these mercies, to take the way that God hath shalked out to come by them; dieing in the Lord is the great qualification that hath all these comforts annexed to it, and living in, and to him, is the indispensably requisit

quiſit qualification of all that would die in him, and this is to live by faith in the Sone of God, and to live Chriſt-like, to live ſo as Chriſt may live in you and ye may live in him, that the truth and the ſtraitneſſe of your union with him may be evident and apparent by the fruits of it; In a word, to live in continual communion with him, and in the cloſſe and conſtant purſute of conformity to him; We will dar to ſay to you that live ſo, yea, to all of you on condition ye will through grace choiſe this way of living, that ye ſhall die happie, for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it, and will make it good, *Bleſſed are they which die in the Lord*, he hath pronounced bleſſedneſſe on ſuch, in death and after death; And upon the other hand, if ye will betake yourſelves to the way of the moſt part, and live carnally and careleſly, and will not think more on death, and will doe no more to prepare and make ready for it, alace! we muſt ſay to you, and dar not but ſay to you, and the Lord will ratifie and confirme it, that ye have nothing to doe with theſe comforts of his people, nor have any part or portion in them; And if ſo, what have ye to comfort yourſelves in, though ye were all Kings and Queens, of the moſt opulent, potent, and flooriſhing Kingdoms in the World? God will ſay to you, *that ye had nothing to doe, to take his Covenant in your mouths, ſince ye hated to be reformed*: And though poor wretches, ye now live in carnal mirth and jollity, yet your laughter and joy, your ſinging and dancing, ſhall by and by be turned into mourning, into weeping, wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth, as your mirth and laughter end, your weeping and houling ſhall begin but never end: Is there not then, O! is there not great, vaſtly great difference betwixt dieing in ſin and dieing in Chriſt? And all this depends on your way of living, And is there not a neceſſity, a moſt abſolute and indiſpenſible neceſſity

ceſſity of your being in him, and of your living in him and to him, as ye would not to your eternal prejudice and loſſe, be found miſtaking or not duely conſidering theſe things that belonge to your peace, till this your day be over and gone, and matters betwixt him and you be paſt all ridding and remedy? Now the Lord himſelfe who only can doe it, powerfully perſwade and prevail with you, ſo to live that ye may have the well-grounded hope of dying in Chriſt, ſince bleſſed and only bleſſed are they who die in the Lord, who reſt from their labours and whoſe works follow them.

FINIS.

Adver-

Advertiſement by *Agneſs Campbell*, relict of the deceaſt *Mr. William Guthrie*, late Miniſter of the Goſpel, to ſuch unto whoſe hands ſome printed papers, called Sermons, bearing the ſaid *Mr. William Guthrie* his name, may come.

Chriſtian Reader.

BEing much afflicted with the ſight of ſome printed papers or Sermons, to which the name of my worthy Husband, now with the Lord, is prefixed, by theſe who have published them, becauſe I found many things therein injurious, not only to his memorie, but to the truth; I was therefor at the paines to cauſe compare them with his notes I have beſide me, and likewayes, to interrogat ſome of his moſt conſcientious and judicious ordinary hearers yet living, anent the ſame; And after due and ſerious conſideration of the whole, I dar very confidently declare, that they are not the genuine works and Sermons of my forſaid Husband, which may be very evident to all that knew him, conſidering the perplexed ſtile, the confuſion and want of connexion, and a multitude of vain repetitions, that are oftentimes to be found therein, as alſo want of that clear method familiar to him, togither with the unſoundneſſe ſometimes of the matter, which was known to be far from him, being well inſtructed in the forme of ſound words, which in all diſcourſes to the people he held faſt. Moreover, there be many things therein clear nonſenſe and

not

not intelligible by the reader, a fault very far from his way in preaching. But this is to be the leſſe wondered at, ſeeing that when he was yet alive, ſome made bold to print ſome Sermons of his without his knowledge, which he would not own, and therefor was neceßitat to emit theſe papers himſelfe, to the advantage of the truth, which otherwayes had been wronged. It is hoped therefor that every conſcientious perſon will be ſo far tender of the truth, and of the fame of ſuch a faithful Miniſter of the Goſpel, who is not now to ſpeak for himſelfe, that they will not look upon theſe printed Sermons as his works, ſeeing they have been put forth to the publick view, without the knowledge or conſent of any of his relations, or Brethren of the Miniſtry, who wer particularly acquaint with him and his way of doctrine, and to whom if he had minded any thing for the preſs, he would have left the charge of the overſight thereof: The world hath already had a taſte of his gift, and of the Spirit that appeared in him, in that uſeful little book published by himſelfe, and bleſſed of God to the edification of many, which I hope will eaſily move the obſerving and judicious Reader, to have theſe lately printed under his name in ſuſpition; I ſhall add no more but for the future entreat, that nothing bearing his name, may be looked upon as his, that is not atteſted by his neareſt relations, and his Brethren of the miniſtrie. This from

Thy Well-wisher

A. C.

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